DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: CASE STUDY OF TWELVE MUSLIMS LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES

by

Talaun Simmons

BARD SCHATZMAN, PhD, Faculty Mentor and Chair

REBA GLIDEWELL, PhD, Committee Member

MARILYN MARKS-FREY, PhD, Committee Member

Curtis R. Brant, PhD, Dean

Harold Abel School of Social and Behavioral Sciences

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

Capella University

June 2014

UMI Number: 3628099

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI 3628099

Published by ProQuest LLC (2014). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.
All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

© Talaun Simmons, 2014

Abstract

The issue explored in this study was domestic violence in the South Asian, Middle Eastern, African and American-born Muslim community in Texas. Taking into account the various influences that impact the perceptions of domestic violence in Muslim families, often reveals interesting similarities. The purpose of this study was to examine the common factors that impact the various dimensions of domestic violence in Muslim families. A qualitative method was suitable based on the identified problem and aims of the study. Data was collected using the qualitative case study research design, which utilized responses to interview questions. The interview questions were guided by field experts. This case study focused on individuals, which resulted in the collection of detailed and in-depth data. The populations of interest for this study were Muslim women from South Asia, Middle East, Africa or the United States, who were previous victims of domestic violence. The data collected from these interviews was then analyzed and compared to Walker's (1999) study of attitudes about domestic violence. Results of the study supported the premise that gender roles, family/community support, and the tolerance for domestic violence were significant factors in the experiences of the participants in this study. The design of the study was guided by Yin's (2003) suggestions for case study design and methods. Twelve themes emerged in this study. The conclusions drawn from the case study were that gender inequalities, societal acceptance, and cultural norms all have an impact on the dimensions of domestic violence in Muslim families.

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my late father James Simmons Ashmon Jr., the most encouraging, loving and supportive man I've ever known. As a child, my father never let me say "I can't" and because of his guidance I learned persistence and I never quit. Philippians 4:13. Daddy I love you and I miss you.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank all of the participants who gave their time to take part in this study. I would also like to thank my faculty mentor and chair Dr. Bard Schatzman and my committee members Dr. Reba Glidewell and Dr. Marilyn Marks-Frey for their valuable contribution and guidance at the various stages of my research and writing.

I would like to offer a very special thanks to my beautiful daughter Sarah, my family and my friends for their encouragement and the years of patience and support. I thank my parents, Taunya and James who instilled in their children the importance that education plays in our lives.

In closing, thank you to the many colleagues and friends who advised and shared their knowledge with me during the past six years, you are appreciated more than you realize.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments iv

List of Tables ix

List of Figures x

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION 1

- Background of the Problem (Introduction) 1
- Statement of the Problem 2
- Purpose of the Study 3
- Significance of the Study 4
- Research Design 6
- Research Questions and Hypotheses 7
- Assumptions and Limitations 7
- Definition of Terms 8
- Expected Findings 9

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW 10

- Introduction to the Literature Review 10
- Theoretical Orientation for the Study 15
  - Feminist theory 15
  - Ecological theory 17
  - Culture of violence theory 20
- Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature Specific to the Topic or Research Question 23
  - Gender Roles 23

Community and Family 24

Tolerance of domestic violence 25

The Precontemplation Stage 26

The Contemplation Stage 27

The Preparation Stage 28

The Action Stage 29

The Maintenance Stage 29

Synthesis of the Research Findings 29

Critique of the Previous Research 30

Psychological Responses to Domestic Violence 31

Depression 31

Self Esteem 31

Summary 32

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY 33

Purpose of the Study 33

Research Design 33

Interview Questions 34

Target Population and Participant Selection 36

Procedures 37

Measures 39

Field Test 39

Research Questions 39

Data Analysis 39

Expected Findings 40
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS 43
Introduction: The Study and the Researcher 43
The Researcher 44
Description of the Sample (Participants) 45
South Asia 45
Middle East 46
Africa 47
United States 48
Research Methodology Applied to the Data Analysis 49
Presentation of the Data and Results of Analysis 50
Description 50
Direct Interpretation 51
Categorical aggregation 52
Within-case analysis 53
Thematic synthesis 58
Interpretive Phase 73
Male privilege 76
Intimidation 77
Minimizing, Denying and Blaming 77
Summary 77
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS 79
Introduction 79

Summary of the Results 79

Discussion of the Results 82

Discussion of the Conclusions 85

Limitations 88

Recommendations for Future Research or Intervention 88

Conclusion 90

REFERENCES 91

APPENDIX A. STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL WORK 102

APPENDIX B. DATA CODING SHEET 104

List of Tables

Table 1. Country of Origin Recurrent Themes 75

List of Figures

Figure 1. Effects of domestic violence 5

Figure 2. Muslim power and control wheel 14

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem (Introduction)

In 2003, an estimated 1.3 million women in the United States were victims of domestic violence. In 2004 that number increased to three million (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003; National Institute of Justice, 2005; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). O'Leary and Maiuro (2001) describe domestic violence as a pattern of physical, verbal, sexual, or emotional abuse of a partner. The Surgeon General's Workshop on Violence and Public Health (Leesburg, Stark, & Flitcraft, 2006) determined domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women in the United States, more than muggings, rapes and auto accidents combined. According to a joint study (O'Leary & Maiuro, 2001; Rennison & Welchans, 2000), domestic violence has struck nearly half of all women (44%) at some point during their adult lives. About half (45%) of those victims reported suffering from more than one type of abuse.

There is limited research examining domestic violence in Muslim families, but studies show that Muslims in the United States are suffering from domestic violence proportionally equal to that of the general population (Ammar, 2007; Ayyub, 2000; Douki, Nacef, Belhadj, & Ghachem, 2003). Previous research on domestic violence in immigrant communities shows that there is an increased vulnerability to victims due to immigration related stressors (Ammar, 2007).

Studies have found that up to 60% of immigrant women in the United States have reported abuse (Brownridge & Halli, 2002; Field & Caetano, 2003; Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001b;

Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a; Raj & Silverman, 2002; Raj & Silverman, 2003; Yoshioka & Dang, 2000). Many studies have found that immigrant victims face challenges accessing services due to cultural and language barriers. Studies of South Asian immigrants found that barriers included a sense of shame and lack of knowledge about legal rights and available resources (Raj & Silverman, 2002; Yoshioka, DiNoia, & Ullah, 2001). Other barriers included economic dependence, illegal immigration status, inability to speak the English language, and the lack of bilingual services available to victims (Raj & Silverman, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Each year, approximately 14% of couples in the United States report incidences of domestic violence (Schafer, Caetano, & Clark, 1998; Rennison et al., 2000) and Muslims are not exempt from this growing social concern. Studies on families show a connection between culture and the occurrence of violence (Ammar, 2007; Ayyub, 2000; Douki, et al., 2003). In a cross-cultural study, Landau, Bjorkquist, Langerspetz, Osterman, and Gideon (2002) found a direct correlation between religiosity and ethnic origin and aggressive behavior.

Kulwicki and Miller (1999) examined 500 Arab women and found that of the 98 percent who were Muslim, 18 to 20 percent had experienced domestic violence. A study by the North American Council for Muslim Women found that of the 63 Muslims surveyed, ten percent had experienced physical abuse (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001c). Haque (2004) found that in some Muslim marriages, males are privileged and females are encouraged to fear their husbands. Some women have stated that it is typical for abusive husbands to use the holy book of Islam, the Qur'an, to require obedience in all matters.

A few individuals interpret the Qur’an to state that the wife's opinions and desires are secondary and many times un-Islamic if not subscribing to all of the requests of the husband

(Faizi, 2001). Abraham (2000) pointed to religious teachings of male authority and female submission as factors contributing to domestic violence; and these teachings of power and control contribute to an acceptance of domestic violence (Al-Hibri, 2002, Ayyub, 2000; Dobash & Dobash, 1981; Hajjar, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover those common aspects of Muslim experiences that contribute to domestic violence. Many Muslims living in the United States are immigrants from South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Additionally, large populations of Americans born in the United States are born into Muslim families or have converted to Islam (Hajjar, 2004; Rehman & Dziegielewski, 2003; U.S. Census, 2008). Research has found that in Muslim homes, approximately ten percent of all women are physically, psychologically or emotionally abused (Ali & Toner, 2001; Haddad & Lummis, 1987; Walker, 1999). Muslim victims face additional barriers brought about by practiced religious interpretations of the Qur'an (Ali et al., 2001).

Barriers such as financial dependence, protecting children, lack of family support, language barriers, immigration, cultural customs, and social practices and norms contribute significantly to an underreporting of domestic violence (Edleson, 1999; Walker, 1999). Dutton (1994) suggested that in diverse communities domestic violence could not be explained by looking at one single factor, but instead viewed from an exploration of various individual, social and cultural factors that may contribute to the violence. The field of psychology has a core value of working to validate theory by verifying data across cultures (American Psychological Association, 2002; Segal, Lonner & Berry, 1998; Walker, 1999).

Hampton, Gullotta, Adams, Potter & Weissberg (1993) suggested that domestic violence has not been fully examined in research across cultures. Domestic violence in the Muslim family

affects the entire community. Victims of domestic violence directly experience the abuse and many family members have witnessed violence against mothers, sisters, nieces, neighbors and extended family.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund (1999), reports that 34% of men and women in the United States have directly witnessed an act of domestic violence. Many Muslim women experience domestic violence and this study used qualitative case study methodology to explore those perspectives of domestic violence from Muslim participants who have been victims of domestic violence. The investigation brought about in this study provides a description of the various dimensions of domestic violence from the perspective of Muslim participants.

Significance of the Study

There are approximately eight million Muslims in the United States; however, there are not many resources that address domestic violence within the Muslim community (Rehman & Dziegielewski 2003; Smith 2002). Previous studies show that domestic violence is a rising social concern among Muslims (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001a; Faizi, 2001; Hajjar, 2004; Kulwicki et al., 1999). Recognizing the perceptions of domestic violence of Muslims may provide insight into understanding the social problem. This study set out to provide information about an ever increasing group of Muslim women who were victims of domestic violence. These Muslim women were interviewed in an exploration to determine if the various cultures shared the same concerns regarding domestic violence. This case study identified themes from the participants' experiences, to provide insight into what contributes to the prevalence of domestic violence, so that the issue can be addressed by health care providers, educators and researchers.

Health care providers, educators and researchers struggle to understand the victims' attachment to the abuser. There are various barriers that make it difficult for a victim to leave

(Mahon, 2001). There are many possible effects of domestic violence in the life of domestic violence victims in mainstream society (Figure 1) that are in concert with the effects experienced by Muslim women. Although a victim is affected by the abuse, Gilligan (1982) found that women make moral decisions mainly by weighing the consequences that affect others, often times not considering the consequences that affect themselves. Therefore, a woman's concern for her children may be a major factor in her decision to leave (Liang, Goodman, Tummala-Narra, &Weintraub, 2005).

Although many women find it difficult to leave, many do not stay in abusive relationships, instead they choose to leave, or they stay and successfully end the violence (Liang, et al, 2005; Mahon, 2001).

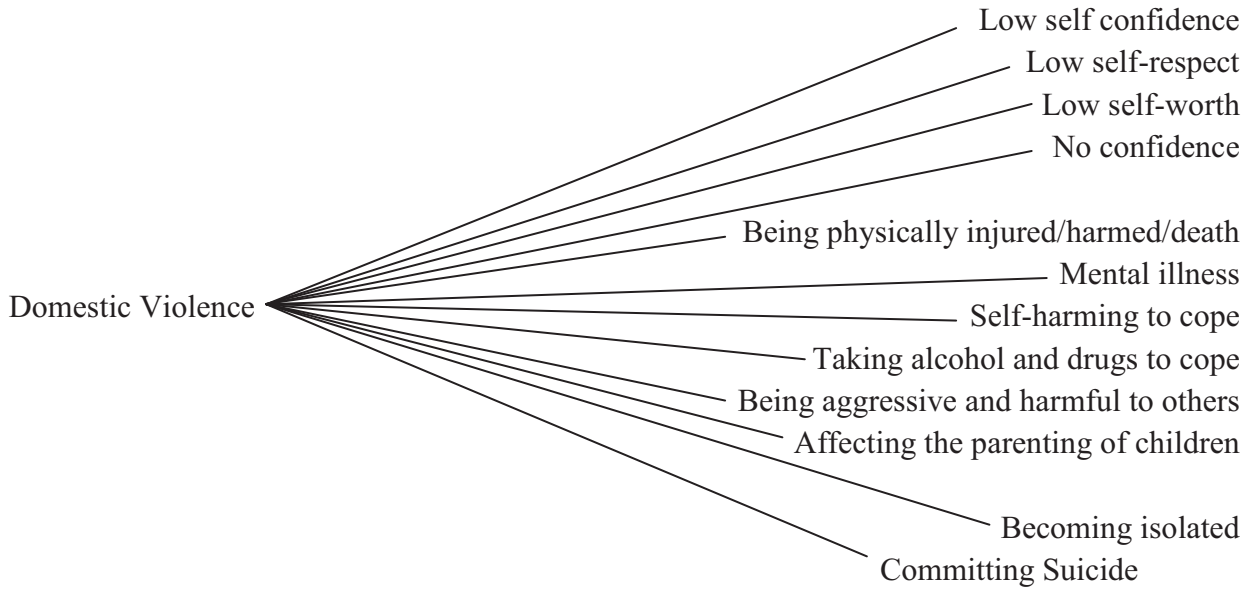

Figure 1. Effects of Domestic Violence

Muslim women may provide insight into this social problem. The domestic violence chart in figure 1 lists the effects of domestic violence recognized in mainstream society. Some similar effects were found with Muslim women who were victims of domestic violence

(Midlarsky, Venkataramani-Kothari & Plante, 2006). Victims of domestic violence eventually leave the relationship if it remains violent over time. Giles-Sims (1983) found that when women experience a pattern of abuse over time, they may leave the relationship and return again to the relationship many times before they make a final break. This back and forth pattern is normal and is influenced by the quality of support and the assistance that the victim receives (Raj & Silverman, 2002). When a victim leaves and returns it is usually intended to pressure the abuser to make a meaningful change, to test and determine support systems, and to evaluate how the children will respond to the separation (Raj & Silverman, 2002). It has been found that immigrant women leave and return back multiple times as do women of the mainstream culture; however the dynamics of leaving and returning in immigrant communities have not been fully explored (Liang et al, 2005).

Research has examined mainstream characteristics of an abusers, power and control motives, and motivation and intervention programs, to explore domestic violence (Felson & Outlaw, 2007; O'Neill, 1998). Although there are many studies that focus on domestic violence, there is a lack of research on domestic violence specifically as it relates to Muslim families. This research will be useful because there are limited studies that explore the dimensions of domestic violence from the perceptions of Muslim women who directly experienced domestic violence. The perceptions of Muslims were studied in order to begin to understand how to prevent domestic violence within the Muslim community. The perception of the females in this study provided a description of domestic violence in the quest for answers to this problem.

Research Design

This study used a case study research design to identify the dimensions of domestic violence in the Muslim community. The process included interviewing Muslim women who

were previous victims of domestic violence. A case study collects data by exploring and utilizing an in depth processes of interviewing and observation. The use of case study as a methodology assists in creating an in depth understanding (Yin, 2003).

A case study focuses on an individual, a group, a community, a program, events or activities (Yin, 2003). A qualitative case study methodology was the appropriate design for this study because it explored participants' perceptions and involved interviewing participants and providing a detailed, in depth collection of data (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003).

Research Questions

Research Question: What are the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslims?

Assumptions

In this study, the following assumptions were made:

1. Participants were honest in answering questions.
2. Participants represented the respective culture of Muslim women who were previously victims of domestic violence.
3. The methods of data collection and analysis used produced reliable information.
4. Readers will gain a greater understanding of the dimensions of domestic violence from Muslims living in the United States who participate in this study.
5. This study will assist the community at large to create prevention and intervention strategies.

Limitations

In this study the limitations were:

1. The information gathered from interviews in this study utilized data of participants who live in Texas and cannot be generalized to the population at large. This study examined

specific segments of adults in the Muslim community within a specified geographic area of Texas. As a result, this study cannot be generalized to other communities outside of this area

2. The results are limited by the details provided by each participant to the interview questions. Successful interviewing highly depends upon the articulate skills of the participant; therefore all of the participants in this study were proficient in the English language.
3. The accuracy of the responses could not be controlled. Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants. With purposive sampling the conclusion of the study was highly dependent on the the experiences of the participants in the study.

Definition of Terms

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used in a relationship by one person to control the other person. Individuals in the relationship may or may not be married or living together and they may be separated or dating. Researchers describe domestic violence as frequent and persistent. Domestic violence is described as having three forms physical, psychological, and sexual abuse of a partner (McDonald, Jouriles & Skopp, 2006).

1. Physical abuse is the actual, the attempted or threatened use of physical force to control, injure or to make the victim afraid.
2. Psychological abuse (including emotional/verbal) is seen when an abuser uses behavior or words to diminish a victim's self-esteem and self-confidence. Destruction of property, isolation from family, friends and support systems, threats to children, control over money, food, personal items, transportation, telephone and stalking.
3. Sexual abuse is any unwanted or forced sexual activity.

Expected Findings

Bracketing is used to clearly outline the assumptions made prior to the data collection. These preconceived ideas are set aside so the researchers' biases do not interfere with the researcher's ability to clearly hear the essence of the participants' experience. Chapter 2 will be made up of a literature review, presenting relevant research on domestic violence in immigrant groups. The literature supports that there are various factors that add to the prevalence of violence in marriage. The assumptions stated earlier in this chapter were bracketed before the data collection occurred. The researchers' assumptions were identified and suspended for the data collection and interpretation. In this study a case study investigation was conducted to communicate the experience of the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslim women.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction to the Literature Review

Domestic violence is learned through observation and reinforcement by family and society and is not caused by genetics or by mental illness (Chantler, 2006). Domestic violence becomes a pattern of behavior because it is effective (Ehrensaft, 2008). The pattern of domestic violence allows the abuser to control the victim by use of intimidation and fear. The victim's show of fear reinforces the abusers use of these control methods (Chantler, 2006).

The purpose of violence for the abuser is to gain control by creating a dependence in which the victims' thoughts and actions are exclusively devoted to fulfilling the needs and requirements of the abuser. The abuser chooses control methods that work, and although some acts may involve children, property or pets, these behaviors are used specifically for control or punishment directed toward the victim. Someone or something other than the victim may be physically harmed, but the assault is part of a pattern of abuse directed toward the victim (Chantler, 2006).

The Muslim power and control wheel was created to show the power and control behaviors commonly used by abusive Muslim men, taking into account various cultural and religious aspects of the abusive behaviors (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 2003). The Muslim power and control wheel shows abusive patterns of behavior that result in injuries that harm the victim physically and/or emotionally by using isolation, minimizing/denying/blaming,

using children, using male privilege, using economic abuse, using coercion and threats, using intimidation, and/or using emotional abuse, displayed in Figure 2 (National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2010). These patterns are in concert with what participants of this study expressed in their interviews. Even a single act of domestic violence may be enough to establish power and control and enough to disrupt marital satisfaction (Ehrensaft, 2008; Yoshioka, 2003). The wheel outlines various challenges faced by Muslim women who are victims of domestic violence. These challenges include:

Using Isolation

- Husband says that as the "qawwamun" (manager) of his wife, he has the God-given right to control her every movement, who she sees and talks to, what she thinks, what she reads.
- Wives are made to get permission to use the telephone, go grocery shopping and visit parents.
- Even if their marriage contract gives her full mobility the husband ignores it.

Minimizing, Denying, Blaming

- Directing children to lie about/trivializing the abuse.
- Denying the abuse by calling it "discipline."
- Saying the wife caused the abuse.
- Tells wife that divulging episodes of abuse equals violation of her Islamic responsibility to protect her husband's privacy and that God will condemn her for it.

Using Children

- Children told they are being beaten to prevent becoming too "American".
- Father threatens to get custody from Islamic court, send children overseas, marry them

off young or kidnap them.

- Children's trauma symptoms used as excuse to batter wife.
- Father encourages children to insult and disrespect mother.
- Husband says he has to abuse mother to stop child abuse.

Using Male Privilege

- Husband's dominance and inflexibility extolled as Qu'ranically mandated requiring obedience in all matters.
- Wife's opinions, aspirations and plans are condemned as "Western" and un-Islamic.
- Children are verbally/physically abused as the "right" of Muslim father.
- Wife is encouraged to fear husband.
- Repeats bogus Hadith [religious text] about women bowing to men.

Using Economic Abuse

- Refusing to allow wife to get education or training.
- Refusing to let her get a job.
- Demanding she quit a job.
- Taking her entire paycheck while Islam allows her to keep it all.
- Hiding family income.

Using Coercion and Threats

- Threatening to marry another wife.
- Threatening "God-ordained" wife beating (Qu'ran 4:34).
- Threatening to leave her without money.
- Threatening to spread the word that she is an adulteress.

- Making her drop charges to preserve extended family's reputation.

Using Intimidation

- Grossly dirtying her kitchen several times a day.
- Having the local Imam [clergyman] tell the wife that the abuse is her fault.
- Customs are disguised as religion.
- Hiding/destroying important documents.
- Taking all her jewelry and selling it.
- Apologizing to others for her disobedience.
- Collecting/displaying weapons.
- Stalking

Using Emotional Abuse

- Belittling/calling wife unfit Muslim mother.
- Making fun of her inadequate Islamic knowledge.
- Calling her names and calling her crazy.
- Making her believe she is incapable of directing her own life.
- Telling abused women they must be quiet, docile and obedient to uphold family honor.
- Lying to her extended family in letters.
- Saying her lovemaking is inferior to Americans.

In marriage, there are expected responsibilities of both the husband and the wife, which provide balance of family life and marital satisfaction (Horley, 2001). Muslims view marriage as the foundation of family life and society (Islam, 1998). The Islamic faith remains flexible and allows Muslims to incorporate cultural beliefs and practices as long as they do not go against the

fundamental principles of Islam (Al-sawy, 1991). Therefore, there may be multiple variations of culture incorporated into the practices of Islam.

Figure 2. Muslim power and control wheel.

National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence. *Wheels: Adapted from the power and control wheel model.* Retrieved from www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html

Theoretical Orientation for the Study

The role of individual, society, and culture in relation to domestic violence is recognized in many theories. Research on domestic violence in immigrant groups suggest that three major factors contribute to domestic violence including gender roles, society, and culture (Abraham, 2000; Goodman, Koss, Browne, Fitzgerald, Russo, Biden & Eeita, 1993). This study utilizes feminist, ecological, and culture of violence theories as a basis for reviewing the various dimensions of domestic violence in Muslim families, and will provide a framework to understand domestic violence within different Muslim cultural groups.

Feminist theory

Feminist theory states that domestic violence is an aspect of social control of women by men. This theory states that men, who subscribe to the use of violence against women, live in a society of people that accept their behavior. Feminist theory also suggests that women who desire equality may face greater rates of domestic violence (Yllo, 1993). Patterns of behavior that lead to domestic violence are rooted in the inequality of power (Dobash & Dobash, 1981). Patriarchy leads to rigid gender roles, which limit a woman's economic opportunity and independence. Patriarchy promotes an inferior regard towards women (Dobash & Dobash, 1981; Holzman, 1994; Sleutel, 1998; Yllo, 1993). Yllo & Bograd (1988) suggested that socially constructed attitudes about male dominance and power might contribute to male violence against women.

In concert with the feminist theory, domestic violence in Muslim families may be largely unopposed because of the strong male dominance in the family structure (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001b). Khalid and Hanson (2004) conducted a study on women and gender role attitudes of Pakistani individuals living in Pakistan and those living in the United States. The researchers

used an Islamic Attitudes toward Women Scale (IATWS) with 195 Pakistani adults living in Lahore, Pakistan and a sample of 140 Pakistani Muslims living in Pittsburg Pennsylvania in the United States. Participants stated that they lived in the United States for many years. Three groups were self-identified liberals, conservatives, and professionals.

Both studies, of the Pakistanis living in Pakistan and of the Pakistani's living in the United States, found that those who self-reported that they were conservative were least likely to believe that husbands who abuse their wives should be punished by local enforcements. These groups were also most likely to report that domestic violence is exaggerated, that husbands who abuse their wives should be excused of the behavior, and that physically abusing one's wife is a way to show affection and love. Gender inequality, particularly male dominance is a major cause of domestic violence (Yin, 2003; Coleman & Straus, 1986).

Male dominance is visible directly and indirectly, examples of dominance include men earning more than women and that men acting as the head of the household. The acceptance as husband being head of household is at the core of domestic violence. Many women believe that when a couple has a disagreement, the husband will have the final say (Chantler, 2006). In male dominated marriages, when disagreements occur and the wife refuses to let the husband have the final say, it can cause trouble and discord. The conflict transforms into a moral judgment and provides a strong justification for violence (Freedman, 2007).

National Domestic Violence Survey analysis indicates that the greater the gap from gender equality, the greater the risk that physical force will be used to gain and maintain power and control in relationships (Coleman & Straus, 1986). Egalitarian couples have the lowest rates of domestic violence and husband dominated couples have the highest rate of domestic violence. Male dominance is related to violence even when the wife believes that the husband should be

the head of the family. Wife dominant couples were also higher than the rate of violence than egalitarian couples, but not as high as husband dominated couples.

Domestic violence is mainly toward women, and there are fewer wife-dominant than husband-dominant couples (Coleman & Straus, 1986). Majority of the victims of domestic violence are female and cultural norms play a significant role in the overall scope of violence against women. Crowell and Burgess (1996) conducted a comprehensive study that included several research studies. Their study reviewed factors associated with becoming a victim of domestic violence. They concluded that that the main factor for becoming a victim of domestic violence was to be a woman. They found that cultural differences as well as the acceptability of domestic violence vary between societies.

Ecological theory

Ecological theory takes into account the society, community, personal relationships, and individuality that makes up the various factors that contribute to societal norms and what an individual believes is acceptable behavior (Crowell & Burgess, 1996). Violence that occurs in families is linked to the acceptance of the larger social environment (Abraham, 2000). Social networks that are formal or casual provide a basis for acceptable behaviors and attitudes of individuals.

Society contributes greatly to the cultural norms and the social and economic environment of an individual. The community determines relationships such as neighborhoods, the work environment, and social networks. Lastly, the individual contributes to the acceptability of domestic violence, and may accept and expect domestic violence to occur (Crowell & Burgess, 1996). Domestic violence takes place in personal relationships. Variations in the frequency and severity of the violence are determined by multiple ecological factors.

Ecological theory states that certain environmental factors play a major role in the perpetuation of domestic violence. These systems include family, economic, and political structures of a society (Abraham, 2000). Many Muslims in the United States are immigrants who have come from male dominated countries. In these countries, men are expected to use the authority given to them to rule and reign. Many of these larger environmental systems encourage families to place men in leadership roles so that they can have the power to dictate what is acceptable, unacceptable, right, wrong, good or bad (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001b).

Studies have shown that there are various factors that increase the likelihood that a man will abuse his wife based on ecological factors (Iqbal, 1990; Leesburg, Stark & Flitcraft, 2006; Malley-Mordson & Hines, 2004; Saleebey, 1994; Walker, 1999). Human behavior is heavily determined by cultural norms, which are the rules of society that specify appropriate action in specific situations. Every society has rules about violence including how violence is used by parents and by spouses (Carson, 1986; Edleson, 1999).

Using violence by parents is permitted in American society, to a certain extent. Parents have the legal right to hit and are expected to do so if their child persistently misbehaves (Carson, 1986). Most parents support and use physical punishment, especially to small children. The National Domestic violence survey found that ninety percent of parents, who participated, approved of physical punishment (Ehrensaft, 2008).

Early laws in the United States allowed for physical punishment in marriage, and a marriage license was considered a hitting license (Chantler, 2006). English common law permitted the use of physical force by husbands to a wife who he considered to be misbehaving. This law is no longer recognized and has not been for many centuries, but in the early 1970's many training manuals published by the Association of Chiefs of Police determined that hitting a

spouse was to be treated as a private matter and arrests should be avoided (Coleman & Straus, 1986).

There is a social norm for the acceptance of hitting in certain circumstances, for example not many individuals would consider it acceptable to hit a spouse because dinner was not prepared correctly, however there would be a higher approval of hitting if individuals were asked if it were acceptable to hit a husband if she came home and found him in bed with another woman. The norm of American society absolutely prohibits violence in one setting, but tolerates it in others.

Tolerance of violence affects the thoughts of abusers and allows them to consider that detection of their abuse will be tolerated. Forty-five percent of physical abuse occurs in high conflict families and this tolerance is a partial explanation of the frequent occurrence of domestic violence (Gelles & Straus 1988). Studies have found that isolation from the community, a lack of social support, and the male acceptance of domestic violence predicts a higher rate of domestic violence in homes (Koenig, Hossain, Ahmed, & Haaga, 1999; Oropesa, 1997). Cross-cultural studies using the ecological model have contributed to the understanding of societal occurrences of violence and domestic violence of women.

Studies have shown that domestic violence occurs more often in societies that have strict gender roles (Heise, 2006) and where masculinity is intertwined in male honor, dominance and being tough (Mccauley, Yurk, Jenckes, & Ford, 1998). Studies have also found that cultural norms of tolerance of physical punishment of women and of children, the use of violence to solve interpersonal conflicts and men having ownership of women are associated with a society that fosters the acceptance of domestic violence (Heise, 2006; Levinson, 1998; Orpinas, 1999). Research has found that marital conflict along with male control of the decision-making and

finances are predictors of domestic violence. Many of the beliefs that center on male control are due to notions that a boy learned as a child from their fathers (Levinson, 1998; Hoffman, Demo & Edwards, 1994; Hotaling & Sugarman., 1990; Oropesa, 1997).

Hotaling and Sugarman (1990) found that males who were abused as a child, witnessed marital violence in the home, had an absent or rejecting father, and frequently use alcohol might contribute to the use of violence in the home (Dutton, 1995; Oropesa, 1997; Parry, Tibbs, Van Der Spuy & Cummins, 1996). Okour and Hijazi (2009) explored the relationship between domestic violence and dysfunction in the family. In this study, questionnaires were administered to a 1560 random sample of female and male undergraduate students from three universities in the Middle Eastern country of Jordan.

Domestic violence was measured by asking each participant if they witnessed or were exposed to verbal or physical violence. Family dysfunction was measured by participants check marking that they had one or more of the following: divorced or separated parents, unavailable parents, good relationship with parents. Results of the study found that 16.5% of participants stated that they had dysfunction in the family. This study found a strong association between witnessing domestic violence, parental use of verbal or physical abuse and the occurrence of violence among university students. This research study found that family dysfunction in addition to witnessing domestic violence was a statistically significant predictor of violent behavior.

Culture of violence theory

Culture of violence are the norms of a culture that permit domestic violence contribute to the increase in the probability of violence occurring. Research on domestic violence and acceptance reveals that there are causal factors of a culture that can be changed if the community

is motivated to change (Yoshioka, 2003). Culture is a guide that incorporates individual values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are continually passed down from one generation to the next (Saleebey, 1994; Sue, 2006; Sue & Sue, 1999). Culture influences the daily life of an individual, and people take their culture with them wherever they go (Malley-Mordson et al., 2004).

Since culture makes up a large part of a persons' life, it is important to look at culture when reviewing the dimensions of domestic violence (Bogat, Levendosky & von Eye, 2005; Crichton-Hill, 2001; Kazarian & Kazarian, 1998; Liang et al., 2005; Malley-Mordson, et al, 2004). A report prepared for Special Program Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs found that 99 percent of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan, Senegal and Yemen housewives and 77 percent of working women are abused by their husbands (Marcus, 1993). There have been various studies with Middle Eastern families that have found high tolerance of domestic violence, traditional expectations of gender roles, strong religious beliefs, and family and extended family loyalty (Haj-Yahia, 2000, 2002, 2003).

Culture of violence theory states that societies having norms against violence have subgroups that act violently and the violence is accepted by the subgroup even though it is not accepted by the mainstream society (Sharma, 1997). Haj-Yahia (1996) found that women who were victims of domestic violence would take responsibility for their husbands' violent behavior. These women would not openly acknowledge the abuse and would resist seeking help from community agencies. In certain cultures, norms are created that permit the use of violence to a greater degree than what the dominant culture permits.

These cultures thrive on having relationships that are supportive of violence and of patriarchal dominance (Malley-Mordson et al., 2004). Eisikovits, Buchbinder and Bshara (2008) found that some Arab men and women believed that domestic violence is not a justification for a

couple to separate. These couples also stated that women should act in culturally appropriate ways when fighting. The study used semi-structured in-depth interviews on 10 couples living in the Israeli city of Nazareth. Couples used for this study interviewed women who called the police after a domestic violence incident, were married, were 25-50 years old, and had three to five children.

Domestic violence victims and abusers participated in this study and each was asked to describe the domestic violence incident for which the police were called. Participants were also asked about their thought process before calling, expectations of the police, actual police intervention, relationships with their family and community, and the satisfaction with the police intervention. This study found that male and female participants believed that there is a culturally acceptable way for a wife, husband and extended family to behave when in a domestic violence situation. In this study, the researchers found that participants believed that it went against the cultural script to seek help from the police or other authorities.

Women who contact authorities for help were seen as revolting against society bringing shame, anger, and hostility and were excommunicated from her family and her husband's family. This study found that the participants think it is better to make their actions agree with the cultural expectations, and the most important acts are to ensure that the integrity of the family remain in good standing. Men in this study suggested that they lost power, prestige and lost their cultural identity due to the stigmatization and labeling of their family. Many immigrant families bring their cultural beliefs, norms and values with them to the United States. Therefore, the findings of this study are relevant and may assist in understanding immigrant families living in the United States.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature Specific to the Topic or Research Question

Domestic violence has been widely researched (Campbell, 1981; Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2003; Gelles et al., 1988; Mahon, 2001), but far less attention has been given to specific diverse groups that experience violence. To be understood, prevention and intervention for domestic violence must be based on clear theories of violence that are explored across cultures (Abraham, 2000; Ammar, 2007; Malley-Mordson et al., 2004). Walker (1999) reviewed several categories significant in the study of domestic violence in immigrant groups. The research determined that numerous factors such as gender roles, community and family support, and the tolerance of domestic violence were significant.

Gender roles

Gender roles in domestic violence have been conceptualized as a cause of domestic violence. In the United States, the reported cases of domestic violence are alarmingly high (Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, 2003). The feminist perspective on domestic violence is accepted worldwide and this perspective suggests that women and girls are the primary targets of male abuse (Walker, 1999). Beliefs of what it is to be masculine and feminine are passed down from one generation to the next. These roles contribute to the pressure on women and men to conform to the cultural norms of the society (Denzin, 1984; Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Heise, 2006; Yllo, 1993).

Muslims women are a growing community and domestic violence is best examined by looking at the gender socialization issues taking into account cultural norms that maintain or create violence in the home (Abraham, 2000). Immigration from a foreign country into the United States may bring about isolation, which may put Muslim women at a greater risk for

domestic violence (Walker, 1999). The perception that men have of themselves and the perception they have for women determine whether violence is used as an act against women (Chantler, 2006). Asian societies are patriarchal (Almeida & Dolan-Delvecchio, 1999) and the cultural traditions that unite communities, as well as acceptance of gender inequalities put women at risk to be a victim of domestic violence (Goodman et al., 1993; Heise, 2006).

Women who are victims of domestic violence reflect the inequalities between men and women (Morash, Hoan, Yan, & Holtfreter, 2007). This type of abuse compromises the health, security and dignity of the victim. Walker (1999) found that domestic violence can result in deep psychological scars, physical hurt, reproductive damage and in some cases death. Most domestic violence is observed through male anger directed toward their female partners.

This gender difference and anger is rooted in the way boys and men are socialized (Freedman, 2007). Pregnant women are in most harm of domestic violence from an abusive spouse. In abusive relationships, most times husbands become more aggressive during the wife's pregnancy and may kick or hit their wives in the stomach. These women run the risk of miscarriage and four times the risk of delivering a baby with low birth weight (Heise, 2006). Families have a significant influence in human development (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Gerbino & Pastorelli, 2003; Meriwether, 2003; Singer, 1999) and violent behavior is initially learned from family especially parents (Caffray & Schneider, 2000; Valois, 2002).

Community and family

Community and family reinforce domestic violence and the prevalence of domestic violence is a result of the acceptance of violence by that society (Ehrensaft, 2008). Krug, Dalhberg, and Mercy (2002) conducted a worldwide study and found that 10 to 69 percent of Muslim women reported being physically abused by a male partner. Domestic violence occurs

every ten seconds in many countries and experts agree that domestic violence includes an imbalance of power and tolerance from the society (Horley, 2001).

Walker (1999) found that fear of condemnation by the community at large and the strong desire to preserve the cultural norms may act as barriers from women leaving her abusive marriage. The community condemnation acts as an encouragement for victims to deny abuse and not speak out against domestic violence (Crichton-Hill, 2001; Kasturirangan, Krishnan, & Riger, 2004; Lee, 2000). Traditional patriarchal cultures promote false concepts of masculinity that create expectation of female subordination to men within the family, and to men who are in positions of power or authority in society (Iqbal, 1990).

Tolerance of domestic violence

The tolerance of domestic violence contributes to domestic violence in families. Changing cultural concepts about masculinity will assist in ending domestic violence (Yoshioka, 2003). Walker (1999) stated that globally, one in every three women has been a victim of domestic violence, and studies have found that in some communities' there are subcultures of people that don't go along with the main culture. These subcultures are accepting of domestic violence even if the main culture is not. The existence of subcultures proves that domestic violence against women is not the result of male biology or sexuality, but instead a matter of how society views and accepts domestic violence (Walker, 1999).

In some societies, husbands who are violent may keep their spouse isolated from the family so they can hide the abuse (Okun, 2001). Raj et al. (2002) found that battered women first turn to an informal support network such as friends or family for help with the violence, but later turn to a more formal network, such as places of worship, police, lawyers and shelters. Islam does not condone any type of domestic violence in marriage (Al-Hibri, 2002; Marks & Dollahite,

2001). When Islamic scholars discuss what the Qur'an says about physical abuse in marriage, there is a debate between two different strategies that married couples should use to solve conflict (Carolan, Bagherinia, Juhari, Himelright, & Mouton-Sanders, 2000).

The Arabic phrase in the Qur'an that creates debate is the translation of the word "wa'driboo." Translated into English, wa'driboo permits wife beatings, whereas other insists the word translates as "cast out" or "hit lightly." Overall, Islamic doctrine encourages couples to seek mediation in times of discord (Marks & Dollahite, 2001). Narrow interpretations of Islam occur from selectively enforcing the few verses in the Qur'an instead of collectively considering the major teachings of Islam (Al-Issa, 2000). There is limited research on Muslim women in abusive relationships, but the limited research does find that there are various unique factors that impact women who are victims of domestic violence (Marks, 2004).

The factors that influence victims of domestic violence in an abusive relationship are significant in regards to their decision to stay or flee from an abusive relationship. The transtheoretical model is the most researched model used to address health-related behavior change of victims of domestic violence. According to the transtheoretical model, victims of domestic violence typically go through five stages of change before they leave their abuser and obtain safety (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983; Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992). The stage of change model recognizes the stages as precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance. Although these stages have been widely studied, there is limited research on how this model relates to Muslim women who are victims of domestic violence.

The Precontemplation Stage in Prochaska et al. (1983) found that individuals in the precontemplation stage do not recognize that the domestic violence occurring in their lives is a problem. The reason that people in this stage seek help is due to outsiders pressuring them to

seek help (Fraiser, Slatt, Kowlowitz, & Glowa, 2001). Immigrant women face barriers when seeking help for domestic violence and leaving their abuser many times has consequences brought about by the community.

Moss, Pitula, Campbell, and Halstead (1997) found that immigrant women who report abuse, fear appearing weak to the community and fear the community backlash. Many Muslim women turn to their Imam or seek help from the Qur'an for guidance. Muslim women may feel that they need to show a positive public image of her faith and a positive image of her community due to the desire to protect the image of Islam and of Muslim men. Moss et al. (1997) qualitative study found that women viewed reporting violence was a sign of weakness.

Women in this study also expressed that they were protecting their families by not reporting the abuse. Various Muslim cultures maintain that family integrity is of high importance. In the Muslim community, it is criticized to seek assistance beyond religious leaders or immediate family; therefore, women may be concerned about the reaction from the community if they discover that the abuse was disclosed. Because of this concern, many Muslim women who are victims of domestic violence have feelings of disloyalty to community and family if they tell outsiders about the abuse. Muslim women are highly regarded as mothers and wives and many women feel that reporting domestic violence tarnishes her position of esteem and strength.

The Contemplation Stage is when a woman has determined that the domestic violence is a problem and she is seeking ways to leave her abuser. During this stage, many women begin to doubt themselves and question their identity (Prochaska et al, 1992). Helping the client connect her self-identity with her history of abuse is a critical step in the change process.

Badawi (2002) found that Muslim women may fear change and feel like they are committing a sin if they consider divorce or if they disobey their husband. Some women rationalize their abusive situation by adopting and conforming to cultural practices in the name of Islam. Muslim victims of domestic violence feel an internal conflict and there are times when they may receive differing messages from the community, her family and from religious guidelines.

The Preparation Stage is when a victim begins to take small steps toward seeking help and toward leaving her abusive situation (Prochaska et al., 1992). If a victim does not thoroughly prepare in this stage, she is likely to return to the contemplation stage and remain in the abusive relationship (Frasier et al., 2001). Victims of domestic violence want to stop being abused but each victim may have different ways to survive the situation (Lindhorst, Nurius & Macy, 2005).

Some women may want to leave their abuser; others may want to increase their safety while remaining in the marriage, while others may seek to change their own reactions to the abuse (Haj-Yahia, 2000). Muslim women report that religion was a source of strength and of vulnerability when they are in abusive relationships.

Reading the Qur'an and praying were reported as helpful coping methods used during and after the abuse to connect to Allah (God) and to lessen the stress brought on by the abuse (Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001b). Although meditation and prayer provide comfort, some women relay on prayer to dissociate from the abuse and this can be a dangerous coping strategy. Hassouneh-Phillips (2001a) found that because of the social stigma of divorce, participants only made life altering changes in their marriage after they had experienced severe psychological, spiritual or physical abuse. Victims, at this point, either made a choice to leave their abusers or to suffer psychological, spiritual or physical death. Muslim women may struggle between leaving

or remaining in the marriage due to the paradoxes of her culture, however, she may still change her behavior and take action (Chantler, 2006).

The Action Stage is the stage when the victim decides to leave the abuse relationship as a change in behavior in an effort to end the abuse. Women who have reached this stage are characterized as having increased levels of will and belief that they have the needed resources to change their situation (Prochaska et al, 1992). Muslim women fear the repercussions associated with disapproval of divorce, such as community shun and shame; therefore, support systems and approval from family is a fundamental concern for women leaving their marriage (Marshall & Yazdani, 1999).

If family and community support is not available, Muslim women may continue to move to the action stage without a support system, this usually requires making substantial changes including leaving her specific Muslim community, relocating, or reaching out to other mosques in search of a healthy supportive community outside of her familiar social and religious circle (Yoshioka, 2003).

The Maintenance Stage includes maintaining a healthy life, including a strong support system. Weak support systems lead to a woman returning to the abusive relationship (Frasier et al., 2001). If a strong support system is not created in the preparation stage, then the victim may have difficulty finding the support that she needs and may have greater difficulty staying away from the abuser than women with a stronger support system (Ehrensaft, 2008).

Synthesis of the Research Findings

Earlier studies suggested that men who abused women were mentally ill and that women who remained in a domestic violence relationship were also mentally ill. There are a number of relationships that involve violence, but psychological tests of abusers did not support the idea

that violence was caused by mental illness. Instead, many abusers and their victims tested "normal" under psychological testing (Fischbach & Herbert, 1997; Hoffman, Demo & Edwards, 1994). Previous research found that men abused because they learned abusive behavior in their families. However, recent research has consistently found that there is no significant statistical relationship between boys who witnessed their fathers abusing their mothers becoming abusers, and no significant statistical relationship between girls who witnessed their mothers being abused becoming victims (Ehrensaft, 2008).

Yoshioka (2003) found that ethnicity, gender, and witnessing domestic violence in the home were significant predictors of attitudes and responses to domestic violence. Some research has suggested that women who were victims of domestic violence suffered from a learned helplessness (Gondolf & Fisher, 2000). However, this suggestion does not address the social or familial reasons that force women to stay in the relationship, and it is also inconsistent with the experiences of many women who actively attempted to resist the abuse and gain safety (Chantler, 2006; Bogat et al., 2005). Morash, Hoan, Yan, and Holtfreter (2007) found that victims have difficulty problem solving. However, other studies have shown that women utilize problem solving to resist abuse and engage in a variety of safety or coping strategies.

Critique of the Previous Research

Finn (1985) compared coping strategies of 56 victims of domestic violence and found that victims of domestic violence were significantly less likely than other women to use support, reframing and spirituality as coping mechanisms. Finn's study failed to consider the possibility of the abuser enforcing isolation upon the victim, the possibility of a victim encountering non-supportive individuals, and although reframing may minimizes physical danger, it may not useful in a domestic violence situation; in addition many victims have reported that spiritual leaders are

not helpful (Campbell, 1989b; Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Edleson, 1999; Okun, 2001).

Psychological Responses to Domestic Violence

Psychological responses in battered women has been explored more frequently than either child or elder abuse (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). Emotional responses of lowered self-esteem and depression are explored most frequently in research (Gelles, 1998; Gondolf et al., 2000; Hoffman et al., 1994). Brownridge and Halli (2002) found that victims tended to react initially with a feeling that they caused the abuser to become violent. As time passed, victims blamed themselves less for causing the abuse, but more for allowing the abuse to continue (Field & Caetano, 2003; Giles-Sims, 1983; Hassouneh-Phillips, 2001c; Raj & Silverman, 2003; Yoshioka & Dang, 2000).

Depression studies have measured clinical depression in women who were victims of domestic violence (Ahmed & Reddy, 2007; Conte 1985; Sleutel, 1998; Walker 1999). Women who left abusive relationships scored higher on depression scale measurements than those still living with the abuser (Walker, 1999).

Self Esteem is a common characteristic found in qualitative studies of victims of domestic violence (Liang, et al, 2005). Sleutel (1998) found that victims of domestic violence score lower on instruments that measure self-esteem or ego strength. Low self-esteem is a characteristic of victims of domestic violence (Ahmed et al., 2007; Campbell 1989a; Goldstein & Rosenbaum 1985; Mahon 2001; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 2001). Sexual abuse has a direct effect on lowered self-esteem, irrespective of the severity or the frequency of physical abuse (Campbell, 1989a; Gondolf & Fisher 2000; Landenburger, 2003). Freedman (2007) found that forty percent of women who are victims of domestic violence are abused sexually. Forcible rape may occur several times per month and forced sex is at times used to make up after physical

abuse.

Summary

Domestic violence is a great disturbance to family harmony (Fischbach & Herbert, 1997). Information about the evolution of how domestic violence is viewed is useful for the understanding of a growing problem (Ehrensaft, 2008). This research study explored the dimensions of domestic violence utilizing self-reported direct experiences of Muslim women who were previous victims. To accomplish this exploration, Muslim woman were interviewed and the data was analyzed taking into account previous research findings that have been found to contribute to the dimensions of domestic violence. Are there common experiences of women from different cultural groups? What perceptions of domestic violence do they share or differ?

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

Domestic violence is a concern in the Muslim community that may continue to perpetuate due to gender inequalities, societal acceptance and cultural norms (Al-Hibri, 2002). Muslim women who were previous victims of domestic violence were the most appropriate individuals to interview for gaining insight. This study used case study methodology to understand the experiences and perceptions of the participants in this study. These perceptions could potentially lead to a discussion of the causes of violence in certain families. Solutions can then be formulated to meet the individual needs of each community based on these perceptions.

For this study, case study methodology was chosen because it allowed open-ended conversational interviews to capture data and allowed participants to speak freely about their experiences and perspective of domestic violence.

Research Design

Case study methodology allowed the participant to freely choose what they discussed (Yin, 2003).

Research Question: *What are the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslims?*

Interview Questions

1. What does the Qur'an say about domestic violence? What do your religious leaders/Imams say about it? What is your understanding of Muslim beliefs about domestic violence?
2. How often or what percentage of families experience domestic violence in your (South Asian, Middle Eastern, African, African American) community?
3. What do you think contributes to domestic violence in your (South Asian, Middle Eastern, African, African American) community?
4. Aside from your religion, what do you see as your cultures attitude about domestic violence? How do you think that those who share your culture feel about domestic violence?
5. How are friends and family influential in the prevention of domestic violence? How much do family members and friends influence a victim's decision about reporting domestic violence to law enforcement?
6. What domestic violence programs are you aware of that are available in your community? How are these programs effective? If they are not effective, what might make them effective?
7. There are various dimensions and behaviors associated with domestic violence. What is your view of the different forms of domestic violence?

The call for awareness coupled with the knowledge of the perceptions of the problem can shape programs that can be meaningful to specific communities. This study used three participants from South Asia, three participants from Middle East, three participants from Africa and three participants from the United States. All participants were Muslim women who were previously

victims of domestic violence. It is believed that this study fulfilled one important step by furthering understanding of domestic violence in the Muslim community.

The theoretical bases for domestic violence along with the knowledge of the experiences of participants may assist in shaping meaningful programs. A field test was conducted to guide interview questions and to ensure the questions were appropriate for the proposed case study. The results of the field test allowed the researcher to determine the correct approach to the research design, questions, and methodology. The field test allowed the researcher to refine aspects of the research design and interview questions as needed.

The study included in-depth, loosely structured interviews conducted with Muslim women who were previously victims of domestic violence. The researcher wanted to probe the lived experiences of the women's perception of domestic violence in their community. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. The researcher used a qualitative method of thematic analysis of the data. The data were categorized into themes. During the interviews, the researcher placed emphasis on allowing them to share as much as they felt comfortable sharing.

All participants took the opportunity to begin answering the interview questions and their stories at their own level of comfort. Some participants began by revealing their family backgrounds and their perspectives of domestic violence. Others answered the questions directly without much elaboration even after probing for additional details. Interviews were consistent with the questions developed, but participants were encouraged to talk freely. On most of the questions and responses, many of the women answered the questions directly and were not free with providing detail and chose not to speak openly in the interview. Others required minimal probing to continue the dialogue.

The responses were transcribed by the researcher and transferred to index cards. One color index card was assigned to each cultural group including South Asian, Middle Eastern, African and United States groups. The data was recorded and the results were examined, categorized by response, and coded by hand, according to the responses. The responses were analyzed to determine if they are consistent with feminist, ecological, or culture of violence theories.

Target Population and Participant Selection

The purpose of this study was to discover those common aspects of experiences from Muslim from South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa and the United States that contribute to domestic violence. Flyers were given to Executives of social service agencies, and the researcher used the snowball effect to increase sample size. In total, thirteen women volunteered to participate, however only twelve of the volunteers met the requirements. One participant was still living with her abuser and therefore failed to meet all of the study eligibility criteria and was not include in the study results.

Twelve women participated in the study including three participants from South Asia, three participants from Middle East, three participants from Africa and three American participants from the United States. Data was collected using a qualitative case study research design, which utilized responses to interview questions. The data collected and analysis were the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences.

This study used a qualitative case study design and women representing four segments of the Muslim community (South Asia, Middle East, Africa, and United States) to investigate domestic violence (Yin, 2003). Each of the twelve participants selected for the study were given

a consent form detailing the purpose and objectives of the study. The participant's confidentiality and privacy were guaranteed. Interviews with each participant were planned for one hour.

The interview questions were used as a guide to focus the responses of the participants. The selection of the participant and the representing community was random. This study utilized a case study approach, attempting to describe and understand the perceptions and experiences of Muslim women. Data were collected and analyzed concurrently and this continued until saturation was reached and no new information originated (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Procedures

After receiving IRB approval, flyers were given to Executives at domestic violence shelters and multiple agencies that assist women who are survivors of domestic violence. Executive directors of these programs gave flyers to potential participants. The flyers had information that provided explanation of the study and participant eligibility. Creswell (2007) stated that purposeful sampling is effective when a researcher can select individuals and sites to understand the central phenomenon. Participants at these sites who were interested in volunteering for the study contacted the researcher and a time and location was set to meet and interview each participant. Participants signed the informed consent and were interviewed. Responses were recorded and notes were taken to collect data.

This study examined the dimensions of domestic violence of twelve Muslim women using conversational interviews as a primary research approach (Yin, 2003). The following data collection methods included audiotaped interviews, note taking of interviews, and observation. Muslim women who were previous victims of domestic violence, using three participants from South Asia, three participants from Middle East, three participants from Africa and three participants from the United States were used for this study. Participants were asked to take part

in an interview regarding their experience with domestic violence.

Participant data was used for statistical purposes only and is strictly private. All data is kept in a locked file cabinet and seven years after the study is published the data will be destroyed and then disposed of through shredding. Only the researcher has seen the information provided from the participant. The researcher kept three copies of the transcriptions and the original in a locked secure file cabinet for seven years. The second copy was kept for reference throughout the research process and the third copy was cut and glued to index cards used for grouping into clusters of themes.

A time was arranged with each participant. Participants chose local areas, libraries and public community centers that were convenient to them. Once a meeting place was established, if applicable a do not disturb sign was placed on the door of the interview room. Each interview began with an explanation on the purpose of the interview, and informed consent and confidentiality. The participants were informed that their information will remain confidential and they are permitted to take a break or to stop the interview at any time. Each participant was asked to sign the confidentiality forms and was asked if they had questions before beginning.

Each interview was recorded and began with an assigned participant number along with the date of the interview. All interviews were audio recorded and later transcribed. The researcher recorded and assigned an interview number. The recorder was placed on a table behind the participant and water was provided for the participant. Chairs were placed approximately five feet away from each other in a face-to-face position. At the time of the interview, notes were taken along with direct quotes spoken by the participant.

Measures

Field Test

Research design, interview questions and methodology were reviewed. Modifications were made based on experts in the field. The research design, questions and methodology used in this study was adjusted based on the responses from the field test. After the adjustments to the research design, questions, and methodology are completed, the researcher utilized a case study qualitative approach using interviews to gather in-depth understanding of domestic violence situations and their meanings (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003).

The interviews were conducted in English and the final questions, after field expert modification, were utilized for the study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

Research Question: What are the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslims?

Data Analysis

Analysis for this study was led by the research question. Data from the interviews were analyzed for common factors of the dimensions of domestic violence within the Muslim community. Each participant was asked the interview questions. The transcribed interviews were transferred to 3x5 index cards and grouped, one color for each of the four groups of participants. The responses were then sorted by theme. Events with common elements within the data that had relevant meaning or significance for the study were grouped together (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2007) calls this process categorical aggregation.

As categories within the data began to emerge, patterns or themes were recognized. Based on the literature and the categories and themes that emerged while conducting the cases, the results of each participant group was analyzed and a general theme was established for each

of the groups and was recorded on the data coding sheet (Appendix B). The data coding sheet lists questions and responses on the individuals. A number 1-3 was placed in the square to show the number of participants from the stated country of origin that provided the given answer. A zero "0" was placed in the square if the participants from that group did not provide the given answer.

Expected Findings

To counter researcher biases, and limit risk to participants, prior approval to conduct this study was granted by Capella University Institutional Review Board prior to beginning the research. To ensure that participants were unidentifiable, participant names were only collected on the consent form with the participant's signature. Informed consent is an ethical and a legal requirement that addresses human rights were signed prior to conducting research. The researcher used informed consents to protect participants from harm including: the consent to participate, and a statement discussing the purpose of the research procedures including the procedures, risks, benefits and voluntary nature of the study, participant right to discontinue and participant confidentiality (Patton, 2002).

Participants of this study signed the informed consent that outlined the purpose, procedures, benefits and risks associated with participating in the study. The consent explained confidentiality of the study and how the data would be used, protected and disposed. Maintaining confidentiality was necessary and it was imperative to limit risk by protecting the confidentiality of the participants in this study (Patton, 2002).

The researcher limited bias by using coding throughout the data collection; this also protected the participants' anonymity. Numbers were used to identify participants and no identifying characteristics were used. The information is in a secure location and is protected.

The final analysis of this study consists of a compilation of all interview questions and a summary of the findings.

To protect participants who have been victims of domestic violence the researcher minimized risk of both psychological and physical harm by implementing safety measures. During the interviews participants were observed for signs of distress such as anxiety, agitation, flashbacks and dissociation. Before the study began all participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time.

Discussion of certain topics, such as domestic violence can place an individual at risk of physical harm in some settings. Participants who had been traumatized might face harm if they participate in research. To limit the risks, participants were provided information through confidentiality protocols (a) the researcher ensured that the location of research conducted was private and far from any previous perpetrator of their domestic violence (b) the assessment of risk was done before their formal participation in the study and a plan for safety was available and the participants were given the choice to withdraw from participation (c) the researcher was prepared to developed a safety plan with all vulnerable participants.

No safety plans were needed for the participants in this study. Safety plans include advising participants to change their phone number; screen calls; save and document all contacts, messages, injuries or other incidents involving the abuser; change locks, if the abuser has a key; avoid staying alone; plan how to get away if confronted by an abusive partner; if they have to meet their partner, do it in a public place; vary their routine; notify school and work contacts; call a shelter for battered women; keep important documents safe.

Important documents include any documentation of past incidents of abuse (i.e. photos, police reports, and medical records), social security cards, birth certificates for self and children,

marriage license, leases or deeds, checkbooks, charge cards, bank statements, insurance policies, and proof of income. Through discussions, women would have been made aware of strategies others have used to ensure their safety, and where they could have went if they needed free help.

This study was qualitative in nature and not designed to prove a hypothesis; therefore, the researcher had no expected outcomes. All of the data gathered was analyzed to find meaning of domestic violence for the participant. This research study discovers the common contributing factors of domestic violence from the perspective of Muslim participants. This study provides an increased knowledge of shared experiences that contribute to domestic violence in Muslim families.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

Introduction: The study and the researcher

This study was designed to explore the dimensions of domestic violence of Muslim women living in the United States, which may lead to a discussion of the aspects of domestic violence in Muslim communities in different parts of the world. Qualitative analysis was used and began with a research situation and utilized case study methodology to gain insights in the lives of participants (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Qualitative methodology research design assumes that the research question would best be investigated by inquiring about the participants' personal feelings rather than collecting set responses gathered by surveys or questionnaires (Patton, 2002).

This study investigated twelve Muslim women in Texas. The interview questions asked were used to explore their perceptions of domestic violence. The investigation was conducted through in-depth interviews. This study explored the dimensions of domestic violence of Muslim participants to gain insight into possible factors that contribute to the violence such as the inequality of power as in the feminist theory, the societal norms as in the ecological theory, and norms of a culture as in the culture of violence theory.

There is a scarcity of research regarding domestic violence in Muslim families and the various dimensions of domestic violence in Muslim groups have not been fully explored. It is vital to gain information on the dimensions of domestic violence communicated directly from

victims. Gaining this information will assist in addressing and developing programs to help Muslim women who are being abused. The goal of this study was to hear directly from the victim, her perspective of the dimensions of domestic violence. Because the countries of origins differed, there was much to be learned by studying these various groups. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis.

The Researcher

The researcher completed post-graduate course work and has had current and previous educational experience with conducting in-depth interviews for exploratory research studies which included observation and writing field notes. No preexisting data from past research experiences were included in this study.

1. During the researchers' undergraduate and graduate studies she was a student assistant in various qualitative research labs. She assisted with three studies including cross and within racial stereotypes, along with studies on the perceptions of attractiveness and was responsible for participant history interviews. For five years the researcher conducted approximately one hundred seventy-five interviews and kept notes on male and female victims of violence.
2. The researchers master's thesis was a content analysis and she utilized skills in grouping and theming. Within this current research study the researcher will conduct a qualitative study using case study methodology.
3. The researcher has taken courses in qualitative research methods Psy7630 and has attended sessions on Qualitative Analysis presented at the Capella University Colloquia.

Description of the Sample (Participants)

This qualitative study investigated the perceptions of domestic violence of twelve Muslim women in Texas. These women had previously been victims of domestic violence and were willing to participate in this study.

A total of twelve participants including three participants from South Asia, three participants from Middle East, three participants from Africa and three American participants from the United States were asked to participate in an interview regarding their experience of domestic violence. The participants of this study all lived in Texas. Interviews were held in the communities and locations comfortable to the participant. Muslims women from South Asia, Middle East, Africa and the United States were the four groups represented. This sample allowed the researcher to gain descriptions from a number of different perspectives. Numbers were assigned to each participant to protect their identity. The following is a description of each participant.

South Asia

Participant #1 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Pakistan. Her ex-husband was also from Pakistan. She was casually dressed in black slacks and a printed top. We met in a private room at a local library for her interview. She admitted that it was difficult for her to respond to being interviewed for the study because although she had been divorced for 20 years, she still felt ashamed from being divorced. Participant #1 had two children from her first marriage, but after her divorce, the family of her ex-husband took the children back to Pakistan and she was not able to have any contact with them anymore.

Participant #2 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Pakistan. Her ex-husband was also from Pakistan. She volunteers at a local women's shelter for victims of domestic violence.

She was most comfortable meeting at her home and the interview took place outside in her backyard patio area. Her ex-husband was a well-known medical doctor in their community and she said that it was difficult to go against him and feared that people would not believe her. She has two adult children they are both married. She mentioned that they witnessed more than they should have as children and they saw their father abusing her.

Participant #3 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Pakistan and her ex-husband was also from Pakistan. We met at her mosque inside of the Islamic school in an empty room. Before she married she was living in Pakistan and her now ex-husband came to the United States to complete his college studies. He sent for her to join him in the United States after 3 years of marriage. She mentioned that when she came to the United States she had two children already and was happy that anybody would want her. She was happy that her children would have a father and a good life in the United States. Participant #3 never worked outside of the house. She made small money by sewing clothes and selling them, and by mending clothing for women in the community. When we met her hair was tied up in a hijab (head scarf), and she wore a long dress covering her arms and at length reaching the tops of her shoes. She said that when she was married she never left the house much except to attend dinner parties with her husband and to go to the mosque to worship.

Middle East

Participant #1 was a middle aged woman from Jordan. Her ex-husband was also from Jordan. She was dressed in blue jeans, a fitted top and heels. We met at the university library inside of one of the study rooms for her interview. She stated that she recently completed her bachelor's degree in business from an online university based overseas. Her ex-husband worked odd jobs and had no college degree. She spoke with a thick accent and Arabic was her native

language. Participant #1 had two adult children one son and one daughter.

Participant #2 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Jordan. Her ex-husband's family was from Jordan but his family moved to Texas when he was a teenager. She was casually dressed in jeans and a long sleeve top. She had her hair covered in a hijab head scarf. She described her ex-husband as never caring for her or for her children. She was interviewed in the local library in a private study room. Participant #2 had four children, all adults now; one daughter and three sons.

Participant #3 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Iraq. Her ex-husband was also from Iraq. She was married for 25 years. She was dressed in jeans and a tee-shirt. She had her hair covered in a scarf. We met at a meeting room at an Islamic community center where she works as a janitor. Participant #3 mentioned that her ex-husband was married before and that she was his second wife, she has two adult sons.

Africa

Participant #1 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Sudan. Her ex-husband was from Egypt. She was fully covered in a long dress and a hijab head scarf covering her hair. We met at her apartment complex in the event room. She mentioned that she was married to a very abusive man for 15 years. Both of her daughters work at the public hospital.

Participant #2 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Somalia. Her ex-husband was also from Somalia. She wore a long dress that covered her arms and the length reached the top of her shoes. She had a head scarf hijab that covered her hair. Participant #2 was interviewed in a local library private study room. She said that she was very happy to think that Muslims would start talking about domestic violence from studies like this one. She has two adult daughters and one son.

Participant #3 was a middle aged Muslim woman from Somalia. Her ex-husband was also from Somalia. She came to the United States after her ex-husband on a student visa. She was married for seven years and had no children due to fertility issues. She wore a long sleeved dress and a head scarf hijab that covered her hair. We met in a restaurant owned by her cousin in the private meeting room for her interview.

United States

Participant #1 was a middle aged Caucasian Muslim convert from Texas. Her ex-husband was from Pakistan. She wore a long dress and had her hair covered in a hijab head scarf. She was born into a Christian family, but converted and began practicing Islam as a teenager after reading and learning about Islam. She was married at the age of 18 to an older Muslim man from Pakistan. Her husband practiced polygamy and she was his second wife. Her ex-husband was 9 years older than her. We met at the university library private study hall room for her interview. She has one adult daughter and one adult son.

Participant #2 was a middle aged African American Muslim from Texas. Her ex-husband was an African American convert from Arkansas his family is not Muslim. Her family always practiced Islam and she was born Muslim. She was casually dressed in blue jeans and a blouse. She has one adult son. We met at the library at the local university in a private study room for her interview.

Participant #3 was a middle aged Caucasian Muslim convert from Texas. Her ex-husband was from Egypt. She said that her family did not follow any religious practices, but she said that they were Christian. She said that she converted to Islam when she was approximately twenty five years old. She was fully covered in a long black dress covering her arms down to the tops of her shoes. Her hair was wrapped in a hijab. Participant #3 had no children. We met at a local

Islamic school for her interview.

Research Methodology Applied to the Data Analysis

Research is needed to explore the dimensions of domestic violence in the Muslim community to explain the various factors that contribute to this growing problem (Ali, Liu & Humedian, 2004). A qualitative method research design of case studies identified factors that contribute to this problem. This study was essential because it provided knowledge of domestic violence in South Asian, Middle Eastern, African and United States born Muslims. A qualitative method research design of case studies was used to explore the dimensions of domestic violence using interviews to collect and compile data.

To ensure the autonomy of the participants, the researcher approached Executive Directors of social service agencies that assist women in need. These Executive Directors gave flyers to potential participants. Interested participants contacted the researcher to take part in the study.

Snowballing was used as a method of expanding the sample. Since it was anticipated that eligible participants for this study would be hard to find, a snowball sample was used to interview Muslims who were previous victims of domestic. A snowball sample asked participants to suggest someone else who might be willing to participate for the study. Participants contacted other potential participants for the study.

The researcher requested the participants have other individuals interested in taking part in the study, contact the researcher (Patton, 2002). Interested individuals contacted the researcher to preserve anonymity and voluntarism. Individuals who met the eligibility criteria for this study were interviewed. The researcher responded to interested individuals by setting up an interview time. The snowball sample provided the researcher with a smaller geographic parameter in each

city, in an attempt to have each group as homogeneous as possible to allow for the responses that would be unique to each specific community.

Texas has a diverse population of Muslims made up of South Asians, Middle Easterners, Africans, and Americans born in the United States. Texas was convenient for the researcher and it has geographic communities with unique characteristics.

Presentation of the Data and Results of Analysis

Previous research has shown that domestic violence intensifies over time and that immigrant victims of domestic violence have a lack of family and community support (Abraham, 2000). Many of the participants in this study indicated that they felt fear of community shame and were initially unwilling to leave the abusive relationship (Ali et al., 2004).

In this chapter, the researcher will present a brief review of each of participant's background. Next, the researcher will outline the themes that emerged from an analysis of the transcribed text. All references to participants are through participant numbers grouped by region of origin and used throughout the study to protect their anonymity. None of the information that might serve to identify the participants, such as city location of the interviews, children's ages, etc., is used in the text. Finally, the researcher summarizes the findings.

Description

Participants in this study were acquired on a volunteer basis, and the researcher discussed the purpose of the study with Muslim women who were previously victims of domestic violence. Not all participants who volunteered were selected for the research. Selected participants were those females who were Muslim women from South Asia, Middle East, Africa or American-born; ages 18-60 who were previously victims of domestic violence and were no longer a victim of domestic violence. Also, participants could not be currently living with their abuser and could

not have children under the age of 18 and could not be currently undergoing counseling for the domestic violence. The researcher obtained informed consent from each participant for the research.

Direct interpretation

The research question: What are the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslims addresses the purpose of this study which was to examine the common factors that impact the various dimensions of domestic violence in Muslim families. Interview questions were asked to explore what are the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslims? The perceptions of twelve Muslim women were expressed during the recorded in-depth interviews.

This study found that the participants felt that their experience with domestic violence was isolated. When asked what percentage of families experience domestic violence in their community. Women stated that domestic violence is not in Muslim families. Many of the women stated that not many women are being abused.

When it comes to community perception and the acceptance of domestic violence, the interpersonal perceptions of gender in the community were mentioned as factors that contributed to domestic violence.

Aside from religion, participants noted that their cultures' attitude about domestic violence was usually to blame the woman for the abuse. Participants mentioned that women are expected to perform certain roles in the home such as cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. If domestic violence occurs, the community faults the wife as a cause for the violence. She is seen as one who is not performing her duties or who is otherwise difficult to live with because of her bad attitude.

Friends and family are embarrassed to have a divorced female family member. Daughters

of divorced women have difficult times finding community acceptance and a partner to marry. The different forms of domestic violence mentioned were physical acts. Participants stated pushing and breaking of fingers and toes along with throwing things were forms of domestic violence.

During the interviews, the researcher found that many of the women in the study were reluctant to speak freely about the specifics of the violence that occurred in their home. The women mentioned that their silence about their abuse stemmed from fear of community rejection and of family shame. It is common for South Asian, Middle East and African immigrant women to show respect by not keeping direct eye contact. In this study many of the participants did not make much eye contact as they spoke.

Categorical aggregation

Categorical aggregation was used after the data were collected and the researcher spent numerous hours over the following weeks listening to the recorded interviews and reading over the transcriptions in search of emerging themes from the research participants. The researcher was aware that her previous literature review of the subject group would influence her interpretation of the interview texts. Therefore, the researcher was careful to apply an objective and unbiased attitude to the reading of the data.

The researcher was able to read transcribed text without preconceptions and without knowing the name of the participants as each had been given an interview number for identification. This approach allowed the researcher to focus only on the information given by the participant during the interview.

The analysis of the interview was an evolving process. An outline of the themes was created and revised multiple times. Throughout the process of writing, it became clear that the

Muslim women in this study shared many commonalities. A total of twelve major theme categories emerged.

Outline of Emergent Themes

1. The Qur'an does not permit domestic violence
2. Religious leaders, do not speak much about domestic violence
3. Domestic violence is not Islamic
4. Domestic violence does not happen in Muslim families
5. Gender, community and cultural factors contribute to domestic violence
6. Mental illness is the reason that the participant was abused
7. Cultural attitude blames the woman and discourages divorce
8. Women are influenced to stay in abusive marriage
9. Domestic violence is a private family matter
10. It is shameful to leave or report your husband
11. Domestic violence programs are limited in what they provide
12. Women recognize physical forms of domestic violence

Within-case analysis

Within case-analysis was utilized to determine themes and patters of meanings that emerged from the data among themes. This data is not compared with data from other cases. This study found meaning in the 12 themes.

1. The Qur'an does not permit domestic violence.

Islam allows Muslims to incorporate cultural practices as long as they do not go against the

fundamental principles of the Islamic sacred book, the Qur'an. In this study, women stated that the Qur'an does not permit domestic violence.

Participants responded that "Qur'an does not say to beat your wife they don't care what Islam says, but it is haram (forbidden in Islamic law)." "Domestic violence is wrong the Qur'an says to treat women with kindness." "Domestic violence is not right. It's not what the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, teaches, believers are to be good to their wives."

2. Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence.

   Many victims of domestic violence turn to religious leaders for assistance, but many Imams are not utilizing their leadership to speak out against domestic violence. Participants of this study stated that their religious leaders do not openly discuss domestic violence to their congregations.

   Participants responded that "Nobody mentions it, if the leaders would mention that it is haram, that it is bad, maybe some men would not do it." "Nobody talks about it in the mosque, its taboo."

3. Domestic violence is not Islamic.

   Participants in this study said that domestic violence is not Islamic. They were aware that Muslims who are abusing their wives are not following the teachings of Islam.

   Participants responded that "Islam is against hitting your wife, but people don't always follow the religion or they say I am the husband so you have to do what I say. They don't care what Islam says, but it is haram."

4. Domestic violence does not happen in Muslim families.

   Participants in this study believed that not many Muslim women were being abused.

Women felt as if their domestic violence situation was not wide spread and a husband abusing their wife was only unique to their husband abusing them. Although these women were in abusive marriages, they felt it was uncommon in Muslim families for husbands to abuse their wives.

Participants responded that "Domestic violence is not here in my community, it only happens maybe only one percent because not many Muslim women are abused by their husbands." "I wouldn't say many it doesn't really happen in Muslim families.

5. Gender, Community and Cultural factors contribute to domestic violence.

   Women in this study mentioned lack of respect for women as a reason for their husbands' abusive behavior. Gender roles and the cultural norms of the community impact abuse in Muslim families.

   Participants responded that "sometimes women are not heard or respected decision makers in the home." "I was a stay at home to my children and since women are not as strong we need our husbands too much and they hurt us and we are trapped."

6. Mental illness is the reason that the participant was abused.

   Women in this study blame mental illness as a reason for their husbands' abusive behavior.

   Participants responded that "He was too stressed and this caused him to be mentally sick and he needs medication but he wouldn't believe he needed it." "Mental problems, that is what contributes."

7. Cultural attitude blames the woman and discourages divorce.

   When a woman experiences abuse she is encouraged by the community to stay married, and is blamed for her misconduct if the marriage experiences discord.

   Participants responded "We have to take care of the house, if we are not doing it good,

other people they think it is the reason for our husbands to hit us." "Our culture knows domestic violence but don't talk about it because you are the one making problems if this happen to you. You are the problem." "Women are blamed for not being a good wife or for having a bad attitude if they are abused by their husbands, they feel it's bad but they say to work it out by keeping the peace."

8. Women are influenced to stay in abusive marriage.

   Women of this study were asked how friends and family influence the prevention of domestic violence. Participants mentioned that they are influenced to stay in the abusive marriage.

   Participants responded that "If you talk about domestic violence and divorce to your friends, your daughters will have a hard time finding a husband so it is better to not tell them." "I think the family influences us to stay more than go. And if you have kids it is not going to make the family happy, so they influence a lot to stay with your husband."

9. Domestic violence is a private family matter.

   In this study, participants stated that they did not want to expose the family problem. Women wanted to avoid stigma and community shame. Women were concerned about community ostracism and stated that that if friends and family know of the domestic violence they would be shunned.

   Participants responded that "If you talk about domestic violence, your daughters will have a hard time finding a husband." The family is embarrassed to have a divorced sister or daughter. Women look bad when they are alone." "If the people find out they will not talk to you so we don't talk about it."

10. It is shameful to leave or report your husband.

Women in this study wanted to protect themselves, their husband and their children from community rejection. Participants were ashamed of their situation and blamed themselves for wanting to leave. They understood that there may be community implications if they divorce. Participants felt that their friends and families would be disappointed if they left their husband.

Participants responded that "My mother encouraged me to stay because she said it would cause problems for the families back home and they would fight." "We went to parties together at friend's house no one knew that we were having big problems. We kept it secret because it is shame to have a bad husband, I couldn't tell anyone because I did not want to be pushed away by my friends."

11. Domestic violence programs are limited in what they provide.

When participants were asked what domestic violence programs they were aware of that were available in their community many of the participants noted that there were limited services available to help them in their time of need.

Participants responded that "I don't know, maybe shelter, but they don't give money and we need money to be without our husband so I had to ask my family and friends for money." "They cannot help us only with a shelter with other women. They should give money to help." "There is a shelter, but when you work, there is nowhere for my children to go."

12. Physical abuse is the common known form of domestic violence.

Women of this study were asked their view of domestic violence. Participants in this study expressed physical acts (hitting, slapping) psychological abuses (name calling) and sexual abuse (forced sex) were known forms of domestic violence. Also mentioned were forms of

violence that was different from that which is commonly mentioned in mainstream society as a form of domestic violence.

Participants stated, “They break the fingers and the toes.” “Pushing and throwing things” were also mentioned as forms of domestic violence. “My husband would force his sex on me, beat me and then want sex with me.” “He reminded me that he has the right to have me whenever he wants.”

Thematic synthesis

Thematic synthesis summarizes the data collected through in-depth interviews that were analyzed for recurring themes. The analyses are organized by the research question that guided this study. Recurring themes were established for the seven interview questions.

Interview Question 1 is what does the Qur’an say about domestic violence? What do your religious leaders/Imams say about it? What is your understanding of Muslim beliefs about domestic violence? Participants in this study mentioned that the Qur’an does not say that is permissible for husbands to abuse their wives. The themes that emerged were the Qur’an does not approve of domestic violence, and religious leaders do not address domestic violence to their congregations.

The Qur’an does not permit domestic violence: South Asia participant #1 stated the Qur’an does not say to beat your wife they don’t care what Islam says, but it is haram.” South Asia participant #2 stated “domestic violence is wrong the Qur’an says to treat women with kindness.” South Asia participant #3 stated “some men say that the Qur’an tells them that it is okay to hit their wife if the wife is not listening to the husband, but that is not right.”

Middle East participant #1 stated “not all the community apply what the Qur’an say and what the religion say some people say the Qur’an tells them to hit us I think all Muslims know

it's wrong, it is haram. Some people follow the Quran and they take care of the women, some of the people they are Muslim, but they don't follow the Quran, they don't apply what the Quran say and they beat" Middle East participant #2 mentioned "in Islam it is haram, it is against the teaching of Islam. Islam say take care of the women" Middle East participant #3 stated "the Qur'an say that if a man is not liking his wife he should not sleep in the same bed with her, and if that not help then to beat her lightly with small thing like a small stick, like a pencil or toothbrush, but to beat to domestic violence is wrong, it is not in the Qur'an to do that."

African participant #1 stated "the Qur'an says that you can hit, but just not very hard. Muslim men know that beating their wife is wrong, but they still do hit hard." African participant #2 stated "it is haram my husband knew that he was not supposed to hit and he would keep it private and not want people to know." African participant #3 stated "the Qur'an says to go away from each other but you are not supposed to hit your wife, there is no good from that."

United States participant #1 stated that "abusers misuse the Qur'an and say that it tells them that hitting is permitted, but to beat your wife goes against the love that Islam represents, it's wrong, it's not Islamic to hurt your wife." United States participant #2 stated "that domestic violence is not right. It's not what the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) teaches and believers are to be good to their wives." United States participant #3 stated "domestic violence is haram; in Islam you can't beat your wife."

***Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence*:** South Asia participant #1 stated that "no body mentions it, if the leaders would mention that it is haram, that it is bad, maybe some men would not do it." South Asia participant #2 stated that "nobody talks about it in the mosque, its taboo." South Asia participant #3 stated that "our religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence."

Middle East participant #1 stated that “Imams don’t talk about domestic violence, but if women hear their Imam say that domestic violence is wrong, it will give them power, they will feel strong.” Middle East participant #2 stated that “religious leaders do not want to get on the bad side of the men so they don’t talk. They take the side of the men because they are men.” Middle East participant #3 stated that “no one talks about it, they think all Muslim husband and wives are not fighting.”

African participant #1 stated that “nothing, if they talk about domestic violence people will be shocked.” African participant #2 stated that “they don’t talk.” African participant #3 “I’ve never heard anyone talk about it.”

United States participant #1 stated that “I went to a seminar where one lady from the community talked about domestic violence, but I’ve never heard a Imam talk about domestic violence at all” United States participant #2 stated that Imam’s don’t talk about domestic violence, I mean sometimes they might say be nice to your wife and that’s about it.” United States participant #3 stated that “they don’t talk about domestic violence.” She stated that she “felt pulled between what I knew about Islam and domestic violence, the silence from the Imams, and my safety.”

***Domestic violence is not Islamic*:** South Asia participant #1 stated that “Islam is against hitting your wife, but people don’t always follow the religion or they say I am the husband so you have to do what I say.” South Asia participant #2 stated that “when my husband was in front of others he says that wife beating is wrong in Islam, but he beat me a lot.” South Asia participant #3 stated that “hitting is not Islamic, and Muslims know that.

Middle East participant #1 stated that “Some of the men, they go to the mosque and pray and they stay in the mosque and they’re beating their wife. My husband was at the mosque all

the time, he prayed all the time and helped at the mosques, he knew it is not Islamic to do what he did to me but he said he was over me because he was the man. The religion say even don't beat them, don't curse them, don't hurt her feelings" Middle East participant #2 stated that "it is not in Islam to do that Muslims should not treat badly their wives." Middle East participant #3 stated that "Muslims know that wife beating is not in Islam, but some people say that the Qur'an says it is okay to beat."

African participant #1 stated that "it is not Islamic." African participant #2 stated that "It is against the teachings of Islam." African participant #3 stated that "some Muslims believe that men can hit their wives. It is not Islamic to hurt your wife."

United States participant #1 stated that "Muslims know better, men know that it is not Islamic to hit their wives, but they do what they want to do and blame it on religion. United States participant #2 stated that "they know it's not something that Islam says is okay, but they don't want to control themselves, men do what they want to do." United States participant #3 stated that "most Muslims know that it is not Islamic to abuse your wife, but some men say that the Qur'an tells the husband to hit the wife."

Interview Question 2 is how often or what percentage of families experience domestic violence in your (South Asian, Middle Eastern, African, African American) community? The participants in this study said that domestic violence is not Islamic. When asked how often domestic violence happens in their community all of the participants were under the impression that domestic violence is not happening in the Muslim community-at-large. The theme that emerged was that they believed that their domestic violence experience was unique to themselves.

***Domestic violence does not happen in Muslim families*:** South Asia participant #1 stated "domestic violence is not here in my community, it only happens maybe only one percent because not many Muslim women are abused by their husbands." South Asia participant #2 stated "I wouldn't say many it doesn't really happen in Muslim families. South Asia participant #3 stated that "domestic violence doesn't happen in the Muslim families, it just happened to me."

Middle Eastern participant #1 stated "not in Muslim families, maybe five percent, something small, not many." Middle Eastern participant #2 stated "women don't tell but I don't think it happens in Muslim families." Middle Eastern participant #3 stated "one percent but probably not in Muslims who are really following Islam. I don't know any other Muslim woman being abused maybe she just doesn't tell anyone."

Africa participant #1 stated "it doesn't happen in Muslim community, I wouldn't say that women are being hit much." Africa participant #2 stated "no one or people don't say." Africa participant #3 stated "it happens but not in Muslims, nobody experience domestic violence."

United States participant #1 stated that "Islam speaks peace, so you don't see domestic violence in Muslim families but there is a small percent that experience abuse by their husband, but they don't report it so we don't really know." United States participant #2 stated that "Muslim men don't beat up their wives so it seems like there is no domestic violence in Muslim families, but women just aren't reporting what is happening so it looks like maybe 2% or less are being abused." United States participant #3 stated "from what I can tell it usually doesn't happen in Muslim families."

Interview Question 3 is what do you think contributes to domestic violence in your (South Asian, Middle Eastern, African, African American) community? Participants stated that the way women are perceived in the community contribute to domestic violence. Women in this

study mention lack of respect for women, not following the religion, alcohol, and mental illness as a reason for their husbands' abusive behavior. The theme that emerged was that gender, community and cultural factors contribute to domestic violence.

***Gender, Community and Cultural factors contribute to domestic violence*:** South Asia participant #1 stated that "It is a man dominated society, the societal make up of this culture. Culture plays a big role into that, because society looks at men that he's in charge of the family. My husband drank with his brothers and he was always mean and I think drinking beer made him that way. He is Muslim, but he did not do what Muslims do." South Asia participant #2 stated that "I did not work and I stayed home with the children so I had no money." South Asia participant #3 stated that "we don't know that we don't have to put up with the abuse and that we can leave. But my sister was younger when she married, but I think if you marry older you don't get along. Domestic violence doesn't happen if you marry when young."

Middle Eastern participant #1 stated that "I was a stay at home to my children and since women are not as strong we need our husbands too much and they hurt us and we are trapped. Middle Eastern participant #2 stated "men say women are under them and we should listen to them. Things like not working make us need the men." Middle East participant #3 felt that being a second wife increased their likelihood of being abused by their spouse, she stated that I am his second wife so he treated me bad. I was his second wife, his first wife died, but he abused me."

African participant #2 mentioned that "when men drink they get violent with their wives and I saw my husband change a lot when he drank. African participant #3 mentioned that "we women need to know more things men do not listen to women. We are not smart to know what we need to know to live. Nobody teach us the way to live without the man so we just go along

with being beat by him. Women are not as smart because we aren't taught about the different things we need to know."

United States participant #1 stated "some contributing factors of domestic violence in the Muslim community are that sometimes women are not heard or respected decision makers in the home. Some men don't allow women to be heard or respected in the community so that makes us an easy target to be abused. But my husband was just not a good Muslim. Brothers like him who say that they are Muslim, but don't follow what is in the Qur'an, make things like domestic violence happen in our community. He took me on as a second wife so we were married in Islamic court, so I think because I was his second wife." United States participant #2 stated that "saying that you're practicing the faith and not really practicing it. My husband said he was Muslim, but he didn't live the way he should have. United States participant #3 stated "I think its lack of education about how to treat your wife. I've noticed a lot of converts into the religion that feel like they can do whatever they want because they think that men are above women. They don't know the religion."

***Mental illness is the reason that the participant was abused*:** South Asia participant #1 mentioned that mental illness or their "head being sick" was the reason for most men abusing their wives. South Asia participant #2 stated "he was too stressed and this caused him to be mentally sick and he needs medication but he wouldn't believe he needed it." South Asia participant #3 stated, "I didn't know that when I got married that my husband was sick and needed medication for his mental problems, but he never got help. When men do not follow what Islam says they do bad. He was not a good man, he was not good."

Middle Eastern participant #1 stated, "I think that mental problems are the main reason for men to hit us." Middle Eastern participant #2 stated "I think that beer makes men violent and

it makes them lose the mind so they are not thinking or don't have a good mind when they abuse their wives" Middle Eastern participant #3 stated, "I think mental illness is the reason why domestic violence is in our community because my husband was sick."

African participant #1 stated that "mental problems, that is what contributes. My husband was Muslim but not Muslim in the right way. I think that he knew I was not strong like him so he did what he did to me." African participant #2 mentioned that "many people think that they [abusers] need to see a doctor for their mental problems so it is probably that problem in their brain that makes them [abusers] abuse us too." African participant #3 stated that "when he beat us he loses his control of his mind and he is taken over by evil."

United States participant #1 stated "he treated me badly but he was kind of sick in the head anyway. I think that men who are not mentally stable make domestic violence occur in our community." United States participant #2 stated, "I think some of these men are mentally ill because how could you do this to your wife and then go to the mosque and make dua (prayer of asking for something). I think if more Muslims were honest about who they were they would change the way they live." United States participant #3 stated, "I've also seen that some brothers are not mentally stable, I think that they should be on some type of medication, but mainly they just want the power over their wives."

Interview Question 4 is aside from your religion, what do you see as your cultures attitude about domestic violence? How do you think that those who share your culture feel about domestic violence? The theme that emerged was that the wife was the main cause for the abusive behavior and the culture expects the couple to stay married.

Cultural attitude blames the woman and discourages divorce: South Asia participant #2 stated that "women have set duties we have to do cleaning, cooking, and care of the children. He

would always have an eye on me, if I went to the store I look up and he was there watching me and seeing what I am buying. I was scared that he could always see me, I could never hide or lie to him." South Asian participant # 3 stated that "They think my cooking was not good for him, my cleaning and the way I took care of the kids. I was not a good wife and I shamed that he's not happy."

Middle Eastern participant #1 stated that "people think you are a difficult wife if you get abused. The attitude is different, the religion is something and the attitude is something else. Not all of the Muslim community follow what God say or say what God say some of them [wives] the women is suffering with them [husbands]." Middle Eastern participant #2 stated "we have to take care of the house, if we are not doing it good, other people they think it is the reason for our husbands to hit us, if not it is the attitude that it is the woman's fault for getting abused because we are the reason why." Middle Eastern participant #3 mentioned that "people in our community think you are not a good wife, even if you are unhappy they say to don't break the family."

African participant #1 stated that "our culture know domestic violence but don't talk about it because you are the one making problems if this happen to you. You are the problem." African participant #2 stated "That it is the woman's fault somehow. I'm not sure, maybe that it's a problem, but not to get a divorce."

United States participant #1 stated women are blamed for not being a good wife or for having a bad attitude if they are abused by their husbands, they feel it's bad but they say to work it out by keeping the peace." United States participant #2 stated that "they know that domestic violence is wrong but as women we are responsible for a lot, if you don't meet your husbands' approval, they use that as an excuse to beat you. Family members told me that I chose the wrong man to marry."

Interview Question 5 is how are friends and family influential in the prevention of domestic violence? How much do family members and friends influence a victim's decision about reporting domestic violence to law enforcement? In this study, participants stated that they did not want to expose the family problem. Participants felt that friends and family influence their decisions about what action to take when being abused. The themes that emerged were friends and families influenced women to stay in the abusive marriage. Women wanted to keep the abuse private to avoid stigma and community shame and they were ashamed to leave or report their husbands to law enforcement.

***Women are influenced to stay in abusive marriage*:** South Asia participant #3 stated that "if you talk about domestic violence and divorce to your friends your daughters will have a hard time finding a husband so it is better to not tell them."

Middle Eastern participant #1 stated "families influence a lot. They are embarrassed and girls have a hard time in life if their mother is divorced. They have a hard time to find good husband." Middle Eastern participant #2 stated that the "family is embarrassed to have a divorced sister or daughter. Women look bad when they are alone."

African participant #1 stated "the family tell you what to do, if you go away from your life the family look bad and the kids." African participant #3 stated "I think the family influence us to stay more than go. And if you have kids it is not going to make the family happy, so they influence a lot to stay with your husband."

United States participant #1 stated "both family and friends have a lot of influence on the prevention of domestic violence. Because of their influence women stay longer than they should. We try to avoid making the family look bad and also avoid what happens to our children because a lot of times our daughters are looked at as dirty after the divorce. They have a divorced mom

and that looks bad for them." United States participant #3 stated that "friends and family are a big force of influence. My husband's family was big on this, and once family members and friends find out that you might get a divorce they immediately start to avoid you and if you have children they will shun them too."

***Domestic violence is a private family matter*:** South Asia participant #1 stated that "If the people find out they will not talk to you so we don't talk about it." South Asia participant #2 stated that "it is shame to have police called on your husband, it is shame and if my friends found out they would not let their daughters play with my daughter they will know that your family is bad and they'll stay away. Some husbands will not let their wives be at your house anymore so we keep it quiet." South Asia participant #3 stated "friends will go away if they know, so I don't say to anybody that I need help because of my husband abusing me. My sister also say that if police come they could take your children too so it is not good to tell the police."

Middle East participant #1 stated that "it is better to keep it quiet so your husband won't go to jail the children get taken away if they find abuse. The family will be shamed. I won't tell friends because people won't talk to you and invite you to their home and my sister and mother tell me to just stay and cope with him." Middle East participant #2 mentioned that family "influences a lot because it hurts the whole family. My parents are in Jordan and his family is there, it makes fights between the families. My family kept it secret but they helped me when others are gone, so if my family says to stay with him I try to stay but it was too bad and the kids were not doing good so I was too scared to listen to what they said to me. They told me not to call police, but they helped me a lot when I had to leave him." Middle East participant #3 "if he think you call police he beat me more. Calling police bring your family down because he go to jail and it is hard to get money to eat and feed the kids. It is shame."

African participant #1 stated that “I did not want to say to anyone that I was being hit by my husband. My friends told me to leave but I know that it make my husband be in jail and I had no way to survive.” African participant #2 stated “it matters a lot because my friends will be going away because their husband will keep them away if I am seen as trouble wife so I did not call police, I kept quiet. African participant #3 stated “family and friends are everything, we need them to help us because it is embarrassing to be beat by your husband, everyone know that your family is broken. Calling police can make your husband go to jail so family help is what you need so they matter a lot.”

United States participant #1 stated mentioned “family members and friends both matter especially if you make it public by calling authorities because then it won’t be a secret anymore. If you tell other [Muslim] sisters you will be judged your whole family will look bad.” United States participant #2 stated “they influence the decision to call law enforcement because your family is who a victim needs the support of once the marriage is over. The fear of calling the police though is that after your husband gets out from jail the abuse gets worse. I called the police on my husband many times, but I needed his help financially to live so I’d take him back and I thought that he would change, but the abuse seemed to get worse every time I called.” United States participant #3 stated that “it helps when the victim and the family agrees with the decision to call the police because there is a chance that the children will get taken away if you don’t make sure that you have a plan for your life to get away from the abuse. It’s best not to tell everybody, you don’t need everyone to know, just friends and family that could help.”

***It is shameful to leave or report your husband*:** South Asia participant #1, whose mother lived in Pakistan, stated “my mother encouraged me to stay because she said it would cause problems for the families back home and they would fight.” South Asia participant #2 stated “we

went to parties together at friend's house no one knew that we were having big problems. We kept it secret because it is shame to have a bad husband, I couldn't tell anyone because I did not want to be pushed away by my friends." South Asia participant #3 "I thought if I left him it made me look like not a good woman and our kids would have no father."

Middle East participant #1 stated that the 'religious leaders told me not to tell anyone because it makes Arabs and Muslims look bad. We went to talk to the sheikh to get help, but he just loved my husband too much and everything my husband said the sheikh just agreed. I was lost and knew that I was a lone so I feel ashamed that I am not a good wife." Middle East participant #2 stated "my daughter is going to have a hard time because of me. It will be hard to get her married. I am ashamed that I am not married, I am a not married woman and that is not good. My husband is still alive, he is not dead so everyone knows I am not widowed, I am divorced. I am like nothing now." Middle East participant #3 stated that "my family said don't do it so I didn't do it for a long time. It is shame to talk or go against him [your husband] so it is best to listen to them [the family]. I only reported when my brother helped me. But my family is what I needed to say it was okay.

Africa participant #1 said "my family told me that I made a promise to Allah (God) to stay married and I should remember my promises that I made" she said that she was "ashamed to let my family and God down." Africa participant #2 stated "It is not good to be a single woman because the men won't treat you fair anymore they don't want their own wives to be at your home anymore." Africa participant #3 stated "if you call police on your husband you are not a good family and that is shame."

United States participant #1 from the United States stated that "my family did not want me to marry him, so I was ashamed to tell them that he was mean and [he was] hitting me."

United States participant #2 stated “Muslim women do not want to divorce because we know that the community of Muslim women will talk about us in a bad way. It is almost like you have a bad sickness and nobody wants to be around you.” United States participant #3 stated that “when I needed help I could not call on my Muslim friends there isn’t anyone there for you if your family is broken. My mom and dad are not Muslim and I was hesitant to tell them about the abuse because I knew they would blame the religion and not the man. They were very judgmental so I was ashamed to tell them and risk them blaming all of my husbands’ abuse on my religion.”

Interview Question 6 is what domestic violence programs are you aware of that are available in your community? How are these programs effective? If they are not effective, what might make them effective? When participants were asked what domestic violence programs they were aware of that were available in their community the theme that emerged was that there were limited services available to help them in their time of need.

***Domestic violence programs are limited in what they provide*:** South Asia participant #1 stated “I don’t know, maybe shelter, but they don’t give money and we need money to be without our husband so I had to ask my family for money” South Asia participant #2 stated “they cannot help us only with a shelter with other women. They should give money to help.” South Asia participant #3 from stated “there is a shelter, but when you work, there is nowhere for my children to go.”

Middle Eastern participant #1 stated that “they give housing for us to help us live and show us skills to find a job, but then we have to go. I live with my sister and she give me money and help me to live.” Middle Eastern participant #2 stated that “I don’t know of programs but there are shelters but the mosque give us money for small bills, but it is hard to be without your

husband until family helps. We need money and job and someone to watch the kids." Middle Eastern participant #3 stated that "I know of programs there are the shelter that help me but it [would] be better if we can stay longer." There is nobody to keep the children when you leave and we need money to help us."

African participant #1 from stated "I don't know programs, family have to help you and pay for you to live so you can make it." Domestic violence shelter was there for us, but you cannot live there forever. A better program would give money and help you with the kids because it is very hard to live." African participant #2 from Africa stated that "all I know is the shelters, they are good." African participant #3 stated that "Programs I don't know. I needed money so that would have made it better for me to have that."

United States participant #1 stated that "There aren't any real programs just mainly training programs through colleges after you get divorced." United States participant #2 stated that "you can get housing through some agencies, but it'd be more helpful to give women help with their kids and money for the bills." United States participant #3 stated that "women can get help through domestic violence programs but mainly it's the other agencies for anyone where you can get help. With these agencies you can learn vocations for working. It'd be more effective if there were programs that offered all services like job placement, apartments, and childcare."

Interview Question 7 is there are various dimensions and behaviors associated with domestic violence. What is your view of the different forms of domestic violence? The theme that emerged was physical acts (hitting, slapping) were commonly viewed as forms of domestic violence.

***Physical abuse is the common known form of domestic violence*:** South Asia participant #1, 2 and 3 mentioned physical forms of domestic violence. "South Asia participant #1, South

Asian participants #3 mentioned psychological abuses (name calling). South Asia participant #1 stated that sex is a form of domestic violence "my husband would force his sex on me beat me and then want sex with me."

Middle East participant #1, 2 and 3 mentioned physical forms of domestic violence. Middle East participant #3 mentioned psychological abuses (name calling)

United States participant #1, 2 and 3 mentioned physical forms of domestic violence. United States participant #2 stated that forced sex was a form of domestic violence she stated that "he reminded me that he has the right to have me whenever he wants."

United States participant #3 mentioned sexual abuse as a form of domestic violence.

Interpretive Phase

As seen from the emergent themes, this study shows that domestic violence may be perpetuated from the differing interpretation of the Qur'an. These interpretations may be providing justification for abusers to continue to abuse. Although not all Muslims subscribe to the interpretation of permitting husbands to hit their wives, those that do, use this meaning and their interpretation of the Qur'an to justify their violent acts. Victims closely following the faith and experiencing domestic violence many times reach out to religious leaders in hopes that the message that they give to the congregation will clarify the use of violence and teach men that domestic violence is wrong. However, many Imams are not utilizing their leadership to speak out against domestic violence, but instead, are choosing to not openly discuss domestic violence to their congregations. Muslim women face barriers when trying to get support from Islamic teachings by the Imam. Religious leaders are not continually addressing the topic of domestic violence; as a result, many women keep silent about the abuse and don't know where to turn for help.

When asked how often domestic violence happens in their community all of the participants were under the impression that domestic violence isn't happening in the community-at-large, instead they believed that their domestic violence experience was unique to themselves. Since domestic violence is kept silent and women are not sharing about the abuse happening in their home, many women who are victims of domestic violence feel like their situation is an isolated case and that domestic violence is not happening in the Muslim community. For lack of a better way to understand the seemingly unique situation that a victim is in, women blame mental illness as a direct cause of domestic violence. Gender, community and cultural acceptance of domestic violence also perpetuate the problem and encourage women to stay in abusive marriages.

Muslim women in this study stayed in abusive marriages and were hesitant to tell others about the abuse. These women did not want to expose their problem to outsiders because they wanted to protect their children, their extended families and themselves from community ostracism and shame. Many women were blamed for causing the discord in the home and the community discouraged divorce and instead expected the victim to keep the peace in the home by changing her attitude or behaviors. Since being a divorced woman can be culturally stigmatizing, support from friends and family were factors that were needed in order for a woman to leave the abuse marriage. Although friends and family may have been told of the domestic violence happening in the home, women were expected to keep the abuse as private as possible and not to contact law enforcement or anyone outside of the family.

Since the situation of domestic violence that women were facing was kept private, and they were reluctant to seek help from sources outside of their trusted friends and family, they

may have been limited in their awareness of the appropriate outside entities that could have potentially helped them as they sought a way out of their abusive marriage.

Women of this study commonly found physical forms of domestic violence wrong and against the teachings of Islam; however, not many of the participants in this study mentioned psychological abuse as a form of violence. Since women of the Muslim community are not aware of the various forms, some women may be victims of abuse and may be tolerating or accepting psychological abuse happening in the home, not seeing this as a form of violence. It may also be that psychological abuse is not a common form of domestic violence occurring in Muslim families.

Table 1. *Country of Origin Recurrent Themes*

	Participant comments			
Question	South Asia	Middle East	Africa	United States
What do your religious leaders/Imams say about it?	Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence.	Domestic violence is wrong. Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence.	Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence.	Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence.
What is your understanding of Muslim beliefs about domestic violence?	Domestic violence is not Islamic.	Domestic violence is haram. Domestic violence is not Islamic.	Domestic violence is haram. Domestic violence is not Islamic.	Domestic violence is not Islamic.
How often or what percentage of families experience domestic violence in your community?	Domestic violence is not in Muslim families.	Domestic violence is not in Muslim families.	Domestic violence is not in Muslim families.	Domestic violence is not in Muslim families.
What do you think contributes to domestic violence in your community?	My husband has a mental illness.	My husband has a mental illness.	My husband has a mental illness.	My husband has a mental illness.

How much do family members and friends influence a victim's decision about reporting domestic violence to law enforcement?	Domestic violence is a private family matter so I did not want to tell anyone or ask for help. It is shameful to leave or report your husband.	Domestic violence is a private family matter so I did not want to tell anyone or ask for help. It is shameful to leave or report your husband.	Domestic violence is a private family matter so I did not want to tell anyone or ask for help. It is shameful to leave or report your husband.	Domestic violence is a private family matter so I did not want to tell anyone or ask for help. It is shameful to leave or report your husband.
What domestic violence programs are you aware of that are available in your community? How are these programs effective? If they are not effective, what might make them effective?	Programs give housing for a short time. They cannot help us.	Programs give housing for a short time. They cannot help us.	Programs give housing for a short time. They cannot help us.	Domestic violence programs are not here until you need job training when you are divorced.
What is your view of the different forms of domestic violence?	Hitting. Slapping.	Hitting. Kicking. Slapping. Throwing things that hit me.	Hitting. Kicking. Slapping. Grabbing/twisting arms.	Hitting. Slapping. Choking. Grabbing/twisting arms. Throwing things that hit me.

In addition, participants in this study stated that male privilege, intimidation, minimizing, denying, and blaming were some of the control behaviors that they experienced. These experiences are consistent with the Muslim power and control wheel.

Male privilege is a power disparity that underlies many of the issues that lead to marital discord (Thompson, 2006). Many relationships are not equal and often the husband is dominating in a marriage (Leesburg et al., 2006). Most men are carefully taught not to recognize male privilege. This study shows that male privilege may be a major factor in the use of violence

against women. One participant from the Middle East said that her husband "…knew it was not Islamic to do what he did to me but he said he was over me because he was the man." Although the husband of this participant knew that his religion of Islam was against domestic violence, he still used physical abuse to gain control of his wife. This is one example of a husband using a combination of religious and cultural beliefs to justify the use violence against his wife.

Intimidation is experienced by women in violent relationships, and many victims report intimidation as one of the major dominating and controlling behaviors from their spouse. One participant of this study from South Asia stated that "he would always have an eye on me. I was scared that he could always see me, I could never hide or lie to him." Intimidation by the use of stalking of a victim is a way for the abuser to create fear and timidity in a victim. The stalking of a victim creates a debilitating fear that stops them from reaching out for help.

Minimizing, denying and blaming is used by victims of domestic violence regularly are blamed for being the cause of the abuse. Women of this study say that the general belief is that if a wife is being treated poorly by her husband it is the fault of the woman being a bad wife. Victims are reluctant to telling others about the abuse because this goes against the culture of protecting the husband and keeping family matters private.

Summary

In total, twelve participants were interviewed and the researcher identified twelve major themes from reading the transcribed text and listening to the audio recordings. The researcher presented the themes in story form and elaborated on them using the participants' own words so that the reader could have an understanding of each participant's view of domestic violence as the participant perceived it.

This study was made up of women who shared religion, but were from various countries and cultural groups. Muslim participants of this study showed that religious affiliation and community and family practices may foster the acceptance of domestic violence. Ending domestic violence would take changing the individual, societal, and cultural norms and attitudes that allow for abusive behavior toward women to continue. The sole act of changing norms will not eliminate violence and as this study shows, it will be difficult to end domestic violence until there is a belief that violence against women is wrong, and communities and families reject abuse.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and interpret the results of Muslim women's perceptions of domestic violence. A qualitative case study was conducted with Muslim women from South Asia, Middle East and Africa who were previously victims of domestic violence. Twelve women participated in this study and each provided data regarding what they perceived as various dimensions of domestic violence in the Muslim community. The data and findings from Chapter 4 were based on interviews with the twelve participants. The results and implications of this study are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5 will address two objectives. The first objective reviews the dimensions of domestic violence from the participants' perspective. The second objective provides recommendations for future research. This chapter will be organized using the following headings (1) Summary of the Results (2) Discussion of the Results (3) Discussion of the Conclusion (4) Limitations (5) Recommendations for Future Research and (6) Research Conclusions.

Summary of the Results

This study was conducted to explore the dimensions of domestic violence of Muslim women who were previously victims of domestic violence. The most common form of violence against women is abuse by their husbands. Domestic violence occurs in all countries and has an

impact in all social, economic, religious, and cultural groups. There is a great deal that we are beginning to know about domestic violence. The research problem was that there is limited research on the dimensions of domestic violence in the Muslim community (Kasturirangan et al., 2004; Kazarian et al., 1998). Professionals recognize the problem of domestic violence and researchers should look carefully at what works in families and what contributes to the violence so that prevention can be recognized and what works can be built upon (Gelles & Straus 1988).

To investigate domestic violence from the lived experiences of Muslim women who were previous victims of domestic violence, the researcher had participants reflect on their own experiences in relation to domestic violence within their community. Each of the twelve participants in the study was a Muslim woman who had been previously abused by their husbands. Most of these women identified with a desire to leave the abusive relationship, but faced opposition from their family and from their community. The researcher chose to use a qualitative research design, which allowed for the examination of the lived experiences of the participants.

According to Yin, 2003, qualitative research is defined as "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (p. 23). This research is significant to the field of psychology because research exploring domestic violence in the Muslim community is limited (Kasturirangan et al., 2004). This study provides a greater understanding of how Muslim women view domestic violence in the community. The results of the study may assist health care professionals to better understand the unique challenges of this population so that effective programs and interventions may be developed.

It is important for clinicians to be knowledgeable and sensitive to the unique needs of Muslim women. The primary sources of literature reviewed for this research included two books on qualitative methods and case study, with Creswell (2007) and Yin (2003) as the main reference. Walker (1999) article on domestic violence was the primary source for information about the theory and Prochaska et al. (1992) was the primary source for information about the stages of change for abused women. Literature found by the researcher included information about the effects of domestic violence; however none of the journal articles read by the researcher was qualitative exploration of Muslim women's perception of domestic violence in their community. Most of the literature found was related to effects of domestic violence on children, emotional effects of domestic violence, or the care of the victim (Carolan, 2000; Carson, 1986). The methodology used for this study was of qualitative design.

According to Creswell (2007) qualitative research is defined as "…methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem…the researcher is an active learner and exploration of the topic…" (p. 15). Yin (2003) based the approach to case study on a constructivist paradigm. Constructivists claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective. Themes were analyzed to discern the transcribed data to determine meaning units, patterns and themes. A within case analysis was performed for each case to find units of meaning, patterns and themes within the single case before moving on to the next individual case. This analysis was performed for each of the twelve participants' data. All of the data was transcribed and compiled by the researcher. Patterns were searched for across all of the participants' data. Themes emerged from the various patterns of data.

Patterns made up the themes that emerged from this study. The first theme that emerged from this study is that the Qur'an is used by abusers to justify abuse. Religious leaders not

speaking out against domestic violence was the second key theme. Participants explained that many times they were wishing that the religious leader of the mosque would mention that domestic violence was wrong, but that they did not hear the leaders speak out against domestic violence. The third theme of participants was that Islam does not condone domestic violence. The religious teachings of is against domestic violence, and in the fourth theme, participants determined that domestic violence is not occurring in Muslim families.

The fifth theme was gender, community and cultural factors contribution to the prevalence of domestic violence. The sixth theme pointed to mental illness as being the major cause for a husband abusing his wife. Many of the women in this study attributed the domestic violence to the abuser having a mental illness. The seventh theme determined that women were blamed for the domestic violence. The eighth theme was women are influenced to stay in an abusive marriage. All of the women in this study thought strongly that it was important to tolerate the domestic violence for a time. The ninth theme is that women are expected to keep the abuse private. The tenth theme was the participants' reluctance to leave the abusive marriage due to fear of community shame and ostracism.

The eleventh theme was the limited resources available for victims of domestic violence. Similar to other immigrant groups many of the women were not aware of services available or felt that the services could not offer what was needed to assist them out of their situation. The final theme of this study's findings was that physical abuse was the common known form of abuse particularly hitting and slapping.

Discussion of the Results

The research question was what are the dimensions of domestic violence for Muslims? This was the initial point for the recording of each interview with the participant. Information

disclosed during the interview sessions was synthesized to describe the participants' perceptions. This approach focused on the participants' natural emerging language and the meaning that the participant themselves assigned to their lived experience. This is a study that has explored the experiences of Muslim women, from South Asia, Middle East, Africa and the United States who were previously victims of domestic violence. Results clearly demonstrated that there are similar experiences for Muslim women across cultures. The objective of this research was to explore and describe those aspects of Muslim experiences that contribute to domestic violence. The research questions were analyzed and grouped based on the participants' country of origin.

Each of the questions is in accordance with evaluating the experiences of the participants in this study who were previously victims of domestic violence. The data consisted of accounts from in-depth, open-ended interviews with twelve participants. As major themes emerged, the researcher found that the participants shared similar experiences. Twelve themes emerged from a detailed examination of the collected data labeled (1) The Qur'an does not permit domestic violence (2) Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence (3) Islam does not condone domestic violence (4) Domestic violence does not happen in Muslim families (5) Gender, community and cultural factors contribute to domestic violence (6) Mental illness is the reason the participant was abused (7) Cultural attitude blames the woman and discourages divorce (8) Women are influenced to stay in abusive marriage (9) Domestic violence is a private family matter (10) It is shameful to leave or report your husband (11) Domestic violence programs are limited in what they provide (12) Physical abuse is the common known form of domestic violence. These themes were presented in Chapter 4.

As outlined in chapter 4, this study suggests that as a group, Muslim women have unique challenges when trying to leave an abusive marriage. Gender, and cultural factors including the

belief that mental illness was the cause of their abuse, should be addressed. Overall results of this study indicate a theoretical framework present in each participant's story. The framework appears liner with one directly effecting the next, this includes feminist ways in determining gender roles, ecological factors and culture of violence, starting with the belief that the woman must submit to the man, progressing through relationship and marital instability which at times results in abuse. One limitation of this study is that the research will not generalize to the entire population. The participants of this study were in Texas and the results are unique to the specific participants of this study (Patton, 2002; Yin 2003). Therefore, this study many not represent all Muslim women's experiences.

A possible design flaw was allowing the participant to be interviewed at a place of their choosing. One participant wanted to meet at her home and was distracted during parts of the interview and another chose to meet at the mosque and initially we could not get into the building which caused the interview to begin late.

Saturation was reached in this study. The results were in concert with previous research that determined that numerous factors such as gender roles, community and family support and the tolerance of domestic violence were significant (Walker, 1999). Domestic violence is an aspect of social control of women by men. Gender inequality, particularly male dominance, is a major cause of domestic violence. Previous literature stated that patterns of behavior that lead to domestic violence are rooted in the inequality of power (Dobash & Dobash, 1981). Rigid gender roles limit a woman's economic opportunity and independence and socially constructed attitudes about male dominance and power contribute to domestic violence (Yllo & Bograd, 1988).

Domestic violence is linked to the acceptance of violence from the larger social

environment. The prevalence of domestic violence is a result of the acceptance by that society (Ehrensaft, 2008). Fear of condemnation by the community at large act as barriers for a woman leaving her abusive marriage (Walker, 1999). The norms of a culture contributes to the increase in the probability of violence occurring. Culture influences the daily life of an individual, and people take their culture with them wherever they go. Globally, one in every three women has been a victim of domestic violence, and studies have found that in some communities' there are subcultures of people that don't go along with the main culture. These subcultures are accepting of domestic violence. Domestic violence is the result of how society views and accepts domestic violence (Walker, 1999).

Discussion of the Conclusions

The researcher combined the data and searched for themes. Since this was a case study, the researcher let the patterns unfold naturally (Creswell, 2007). The findings of this study, compared to previous literature, were similar in many ways. There is an increase of domestic violence for couples in the United States, similarly Muslims couples are experiencing this problem, but domestic violence in these communities may be underreported (Rennison et al., 2000; Schafer, Caetano, & Clark, 1998). Walker (1999) stated that gender roles, community and family, and tolerance for domestic violence are factors that contribute to the growing trend of domestic violence in families.

The participants of this study acknowledged various dimensions of their abusive marriages. They described lack of religious leaders support, lack of family support, and community condemnation. Most participants reported minimal family and community support, but also expressed a belief that there were no agencies to help them escape the abuse. They recognized consequences and benefits from family when they chose to leave their abusers. They

also identified financial dependence on their spouse as a barrier, causing them to stay in the abuse marriage as a means for them to continue to financially survive. These women acknowledge a shift their thinking from community shame to being safe and getting out of their abusive marriages. The participants in this study made remarks that agree with Walker's assessment. No contrast could be found with previous research, except that this research study is a qualitative inquiry and does not contain quantitative data.

This qualitative study has found that Muslim women who participated in this study faced barriers to leaving their abuser due to gender role biases of a divorced woman, lack of community and family support, and shame associated with divorce. Women of this study expressed that it is easier to stay in the abusive marriage than to face the community shame and exile handed down by the community due to divorce. Gender roles play a part in the tolerance for abuse and future research may look at the acceptance of male dominance and privilege in the home country of Muslim male immigrants to understand how best to combat the tolerance for abuse (Walker, 1999). Also, men living in the United States should be studied to determine the ridged gender roles that subjugate women that hold unrealistic expectations of wives and create unhealthy control in a relationship (Brookhof et al., 1997).

Men who are abusive are seeking power and control over the relationship and use various acts to hurt and to diminish the strength of their partner (Mahon, 2001). This study is consistent with other studies on immigrant victims who have reported that being a woman puts a woman at a disadvantage and at risk for being abused (Bui & Morash, 1999; Walker, 1999). The results of this study were similar to previous literature. Since the early days of the women's movement to protect battered women, there has been a reluctance to include religious language or practices as part of the solution to domestic violence (Brown & Bohn, 1989). This study showed that

participants' recognize that faith leaders do not address domestic violence and Islam does not condone domestic violence even though domestic violence is occurring in Muslim homes. When religious leaders speak out against domestic violence, the impact on victims is profound (Ammar, 2007).

Religious leaders have not generally held abusers accountable and have responded to domestic violence in silence. This sends a message that domestic violence is acceptable. One hundred percent of participants stated that domestic violence is private family matter so they did not want to tell anyone or ask for help. One hundred percent of participants stated that it is shameful to leave or report your husband. Sexual abuse was mentioned by two participants, one from South Asia and one from the United States. This study showed that males and females are encouraged to maintain the family unit, and Muslim women who are victims of domestic violence stay in abusive marriages because they fear their husbands, and the family and community backlash that is associated with divorce.

In sum, abusive husbands discourage divorce and encourage submission by using the Qu'ran to require obedience in all matters. Although participants stated that domestic violence was not Islamic, participants stated that religious leaders do not speak about domestic violence to the congregation. There is a misbelief that domestic violence is not in Muslim families and people in the Muslim community believe that there are a low percent of Muslim women being abused. Gender, community and cultural factors contribute to domestic violence including blaming women for the abuse and discouraging divorce. There is also a common misbelief that mental illness is the reason men are abusive to their wives. Women stated that physical abuse is the main form of domestic violence, but sexual abuse was also found to add to the experience of some of the participants in this study. This study found that men felt like it was appropriate to

use violence and that it was their right to do so. Most women are familiar with shelters and employment programs available after the victim is independent from the abuser, but recognize that there are limited help available for Muslim women who are victims of domestic violence, outside of shelter and employment services.

This study confirmed works found in the literature review. No prior research was found utilizing a case study on previous victims of Muslim women's perspective on the dimensions of domestic violence. There was no research found in the literature review that disagreed with the findings of this research regarding experience, or domestic violence in Muslim communities. The researcher is unaware of any research after completion of this study that disconfirms this study.

Limitations

The findings of this study should be viewed acknowledging some of its limitations. All data of this study were based on self-reports, therefore, non-disclosure due to social acceptance may be an issue. The small sample of 12 participants (*N=12*) limits the ability to generalize the findings to other populations of Muslims living in the United States, who were previously victims of domestic violence; therefore the results cannot be generalized. Despite the methodological constraints, this studies' strength is in the insight gained from listening to the women's interview answers, which allowed the researcher to represent the findings as the direct experiences of the participants.

Recommendations for Future Research or Interventions

The results of this study indicate a critical need for additional research in numerous areas on domestic violence in the Muslim community. There are several recommendations for the future research, policy and practice.

1. Many participants in this study were not fully aware of the various domestic violence

programs that provide help to victims. Domestic violence is criminally prosecuted and there is help for victims, however there are cultural barriers that may prevent women from accessing the help that is available. Since Muslim women do not typically reach out for help, domestic violence is often hidden and unrecognized. Information and outreach should be available through methods that are easily accessed by these women such as mosques, ethnic grocery stores, radio stations and ethnic newspapers.

2. Health care providers should evaluate for domestic violence since many women seek medical care for themselves. Providers should be aware of the various resources available to women in need of services that provide help for victims of domestic violence. Future research should explore the various supports that assisted these women in leaving their abuser. Understanding what these women deem helpful will allow for clinicians to respond appropriately and to create resources to address unmet needs.
3. Domestic violence across cultures varies and there is not significant data available on the frequency, severity or culturally significant factors of the problem. One limitation to this type of research study is that it must be comparable to the work of other researchers in other countries. Quantitative data collected from South Asia, Middle East and Africa would be beneficial to document the severity and the impact of the problem, as well as qualitative data to add to the understanding of domestic violence as a feminist, ecological and/or cultural problem. In addition, strategies to study the prevalence of domestic violence and strategies to end it should be explored by the women affected by domestic violence. More information on the abuser and on the behaviors is also important to introduce change.
4. Muslim women in this study stated that Islam does not condone domestic violence and

that domestic violence goes against what is written in the Qur'an. Future studies may look at how people use Qur'anic verses to support domestic violence.

Conclusion

The participants in this study stated that although Islam does not condone domestic violence, they were physically abused by their husbands. The process of leaving was challenging for them because of the societal acceptance of male dominance. Many of the women wanted to stay in the marital relationship to avoid family and community embarrassment and to avoid being ostracized. This study shows that gender inequalities, societal acceptance, and cultural norms all have an impact on the dimensions of domestic violence. This study will provide information for psychologists, educators and researchers working with Muslim victims.

REFERENCES

Abraham, M. (2000). Isolation as a form of marital violence: The South Asian immigrant experience. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless*, *9*, 221–236.

Ahmed, S., & Reddy, L. A. (2007). Understanding the mental health needs of American Muslims: Recommendations and considerations for practice. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *35*, 207–219.

Ali, A., & Toner, B.B. (2001). Self-esteem as a predictor of attitudes toward wife abuse among Muslim women and men in Canada. *Journal of Social Psychology, 141*, 23-30.

Ali, S. R., Liu, W. M., & Humedian, M. (2004). Islam 101: Understanding the religion and therapy implications. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *35*, 635–642.

Al-Hibri, A.Y. (2002). An Islamic perspective on domestic violence. *International Law Journal, 4,* 29-46.

Al-Issa, I. (2000). Religion and psychopathology. In I. Al-Issa (Ed.), *Al-Junun: Mental illness in the Islamic world*. Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Almeida, R. B. & Dolan-Delvecchio, K. (1999). Addressing culture in batterers intervention: The Asian Indian community as an illustrative example. *Violence Against Women, 5*, 654-683

Al-sawy, S. (1991). Introduction to the principles of Islamic jurisprudence. *Suara Al-Istiqamah, 3*(1), 70–72.

American Psychological Association. (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and of conduct. *American Psychologist, 57*(12), 925-931.

Ammar, N. (2007). Wife battery in Islam: A comprehensive understanding of interpretations. *Violence Against Women, 13*(5), 516-526.

Ayyub, R. (2000). Domestic violence in the South Asian Muslim immigrant population in the United States. *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless, 9*, 237-248.

Badawi, J. A. (2002). *Gender equity in Islam*. Retrieved from http://www.islamicity.com/articles/articles.asp?ref=IC0210–1757&p=1

Bandura, A., Caprara, G.B., Barbaranelli, C., Gerbino, M., & Pastorelli, C. (2003). Role of affective self-regulatory efficacy in diverse spheres of psychosocial functioning. *Child Development, 74*(3), 769-782.

Bogat, G. A., Levendosky, A. A., & von Eye, A. (2005). The future research on intimate partner violence: Person-oriented and variable perspectives. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 36,* 49-70.

Brown, J.C. & Bohn, C.R. (1989). *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse*. New York, NY: Pilgrim Press.

Brownridge, D. A., & Halli, S. S. (2002). Double jeopardy? Violence against immigrant women in Canada. *Violence and Victims*, *17,* 455–471.

Bui, H., & Morash, M. (1999). Domestic violence in a Vietnamese immigrant community: An exploratory study. *Violence Against Women*, *5*, 769–795.

Caffray, C.M., & Schneider, S.L. (2000). Why do they do it? Affective motivators in adolescents' decisions to participate in risk behaviors. *Cognition and Emotion 14*(4), 543-576.

Campbell, J.C. (1989a). A test of two explanatory models of women's responses to battering. *Nursing Research 38*, 18-24.

Campbell, J.C. (1989b). Contemporary Muslim families: Research and practice. *Contemporary Family Therapy 22*(1), 67.

Carson, B.A. (1986). Parents who don't spank: Deviation in the legitimation of physical force. *Educational and Psychological Measures 20*, 37-46.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2003). *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. Atlanta, GA: National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control.

Chantler, K. (2006). Independence, dependency and interdependence: struggles and resistances of minoritized women within and on leaving violent relationship. *Feminist Review 82,* 27-49

Coleman, D.H., & Straus, M.A. (1986). Marital power conflict and violence in a nationally reprehensive sample of American couples. *Violence and Victims 1,* 141-157.

Conte, J.R. (1985). The effects of sexual abuse on children: A critique and suggestions for future research. *Victimology 10,* 110-130.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crichton-Hill, Y. (2001). Challenging ethnocentric explanations of domestic violence: Let us decide, then value our decisions-a Samoan response. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse, 2,* 203-214.

Crowell, N.A., & Burgess, A.W. (1996). *Understanding Violence Against Women.* Washington D.C; National Academy Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1984). Towards a phenomenology of domestic domestic violence. *American Journal of Sociology, 90,* 485-511.

Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (1981). *Violence against wives: A case against the patriarchy.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, R. P. (1992). *Women, violence and social change.* London Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (2003). *Creating a public response to private violence*. MN: Minnesota Program

Douki, S., Nacef, F., Belhadj, A., & Ghachem, R. (2003). Archives of womens health. *Mental Health, 6(3)*, 165-171.

Dutton, D.G. (1994). Wife assaulters' explanations for assault: The neutralization of self-punishment. Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, *18*(4), 381- 390.

Dutton, D.G. (1995). *The Domestic Assault of Women: Psychological and Criminal Justice Perspectives*. Vancouver, British Colombia, University of British Colombia Press.

Edleson, J. L. (1999). Children's witnessing of adult domestic violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 14*(8), 839-870.

Ehrensaft, M. (2008). Intimate partner violence: Persistence of myths and implications for intervention. *Children and Youth Services Review*

Eisikovits, Z., Buchbinder, E. & Bshara A. (2008).Between the person and the culture: Israeli Arab couple's perceptions of police intervention in intimate partner violence. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work. 17*(2), 108-129.

Faizi, N. (2001). Domestic violence in the Muslim community. *Texas Journal of Women and the Law, 10*, 209-230.

Family Violence Prevention Fund (1999). *Preventing domestic violence: Clinical guidelines on routine screening, family violence prevention fund.* San Francisco, CA.

Felson, R. B. & Outlaw, M. (2007). The control motive and marital violence. *Violence and Victims, 22* (4), 387-407.

Field, C. A., & Caetano, R. (2003). Longitudinal model predicting partner violence among white, black and Hispanic couples in the United States. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research, 27*, 1451–1458.

Finn, J. (1985). The stresses and coping behavior of battered women. *Social Casework 86,* 341-349.

Fischbach, R., & Herbert, B. (1997). Domestic violence and mental health: correlates and conundrums within the across cultures. *Social Science and Medicine, 45*(8), 1161-1176**.**

Forst, B.E. & Hernon, J.C. (1985). The criminal justice response to victim harm. *National Institute of Justice: Research in Brief.* Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of Justice.

Frasier, P. Y., Slatt, L., Kowlowitz, V., & Glowa, P. T. (2001). *Using the stages of change model to counsel victims of intimate partner violence. Patient Education and Counseling*, *43*, 211–217.

Freedman, E. (2007). Patriarchy revisited: Gender, race and sexual violence. *Journal of Women's History 28,* 258-269.

Gelles, R.J. & Straus, M.A. (1988). *Intimate Violence.* New York, NY: Simon and Schuster

Giles-Sims, J. (1983). *Wife battering: A system theory approach*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Goldstein, D., & Rosenbaum, A. (1985). An evaluation of the self-esteem of maritallly violence men. *Family Relations 34,* 425-437.

Gondolf, E.W., & Fisher, E.R. (2000). *Battered women as survivors: An alternative to treating learned helplessness.* Lexington, MA: Lexington.

Goodman, L., Koss, M.P., Browne, A., Fitzgerald, L., Russo, N.F., Biden, J.R., & Eeita, G.P. (1993). Male violence against women: Current research and future directions. *American Psychologist, 48*, 1054-1087.

Haddad, Y., & Lummis, A.T (1987). *Islamic Values in the United States.* New York, NY: Oxford Press.

Haj-Yahia, M. (1996). Intimate partner violence in the Arab society in Israel: Challenges for future change. In J. L. Edleson & Z. C. Eisikovits (Eds.), *Future interventions with battered women and their families* (pp. 87-101). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Haj-Yahia, M. (2000). Intimate partner violence and battering in the sociocultural context of Arab society. *Family Process, 39,* 237-255.

Haj-Yahia, M. (2002). Attitudes of Arab women toward different patterns of coping with intimate partner violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 17,* 721-745.

Haj-Yahia, M. (2003). Beliefs about wife beating among Arab men in Israel: The influence of their patriarchal ideology. *Journal of Domestic violence, 18,* 193-206.

Hajjar, L. (2004). Religion, state power, and domestic violence in Muslim societies: A Framework for comparative analysis. *Law & Social Inquiry, 29* (1), 1 - 38

Hampton, R. L, Gullotta, T.P., Adams, G.R., Potter, E.H., III, & Weissberg, R.P., (Eds.). (1993). *Domestic violence prevention and treatment.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Haque, A. (2004). Religion and mental health: The case of American Muslims. *Journal of Religion and Health*, *43*, 45–58.

Hassouneh-Phillips, D. (2001a). Marriage is half of faith and the rest is fear of Allah: Marriage and domestic violence among American Muslims. *Violence Against Women, 7*, 927–946.

Hassouneh-Phillips, D. (2001b). Polygamy and wife abuse: A qualitative study of Muslim women in America. *Healthcare for Women International, 27*, 735–748.

Hassouneh-Phillips, D. (2001c). American Muslim women's experiences of leaving abusive relationships. *Health Care for Women International*, *22*, 415–432.

Heise, L. (2006). Violence against women: An integrated, ecological framework. *Violence Against Women 4*(3), 262-290.

Hoffman, K.L., Demo, D.H. & Edwards, J.N. (1994). Physical wife abuse in a non-western society: An integrated theoretical approach. *Journal of Marriage and the Family 56,* 131-146.

Holzman, A., & Stuart, G.L. (1994). Typologies of male batterers: Three subtypes and the differences among them. *Psychological Bulletin, 116*, 476-497.

Horley, S. (2001). *Domestic violence: The issue explained*. Retrieved from www.guardian.co.uk/psychological_society

Hotaling, G.T. & Sugarman, D.B. (1990). A risk marker analysis of assaulted wives. *Journal of Domestic violence 5*(1), 1-13.

Iqbal, J. (1990), .Crimes Against Women in Pakistan. *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, 13*(3) 37-45.

Islam, H. (1998). *Married life in Islam: The nature and intimacy of the husband-wife relationship.* Retrieved from http://islam.about.com

Kasturirangan, A., Krishnan, S., & Riger, S. (2004). The impact of culture and minority status on women's experience of domestic violence. *Trauma, Violence and Abuse, 5,* 318-332.

Kazarian, S. S., & Kazarian, L. Z. (1998). Cultural aspects of domestic violence. In S. S. Kazadan & D. R. Evans (Eds.), *Cultural clinical psychology: Theory, research, and practice.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Khalid, R. & Hanson, I. F. (2004). Measuring perceptions of gender roles: The IAWS for Pakistani and U.S. Immigrant populations. *Sex roles 15*(5), 234-245

Koenig, M., Hossain, M.B., Ahmed, S., & Haaga, J. (1999). *Individual and community-level determinants of domestic violence in rural Bangladesh.* Baltimore, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Department of Population and Family Health Sciences.

Krug, E., Dalhberg, L., & Mercy, J. (2002). *World report on violence and health: World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.* Retrieved from www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report

Kulwicki, A.D., & Miller, J. (1999). Domestic violence in the Arab American population: Transforming Environmental Conditions through Community Education. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, *20* (3), 199-215.

Landau, S., Bjorkquist, K., Langerspetz, K., Osterman, K., & Gideon, L. (2002). The effect of religiosity and ethnic origin on direct and indirect aggression among males and females: Some Israeli findings. *Aggressive Behavior, 28*(4), 281-298.

Landenburger, K.M. (2003). Conflicting realities of women in abusive relationships. *Communication Nursing Research 21,* 15-20.

Lee, M.Y. (2000). Understanding Chinese battered women in North America: A review of the literature and practical implications. *Journal of Multicultural Social Work, 8.* 215-241.

Leesburg, V.A., Stark, E, & Flitcraft, A. (2006). *Spouse abuse.* In Source book: Surgeon General's Workshop on Violence and Public Health, Washington, D.C.

Levinson, D. (1998). *Violence in Cross Cultural Perspective.* Newbury Park, California, Sage Publications.

Liang, B., Goodman, L., Tummala-Narra, P., & Weintraub, S. (2005). A theoretical framework for understanding help-seeking processes among survivors of intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 36,* 71-84.

Lindhorst, T., Nurius, P., & Macy, R. J. (2005). Contextualized assessment with battered women: Strategic safety planning to cope with multiple harms. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *41*, 331–352.

Mahon, L. (2001). Common characteristics of abused women. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing 3,* 137-157.

Malley-Mordson, K., & Hines, D. A. (2004). *Domestic violence in a cultural perspective: Defining, understanding, and combating abuse.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Marks, L. (2004). Sacred practices in highly religious families: Christian, Jewish, Mormon, and Muslim perspectives. *Family Process*, *43*, 217–231.

Marks, L. D., & Dollahite, D. C. (2001). Religion, relationships, and responsible fathering in latter-day saint families of children with special needs. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *18*, 625–650.

Marshall, H. & Yazdani, A. (1999). Location culture in accounting for self-harm amongst Asian young women. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology 9*, 413-433.

Marcus, R. (1993). Violence against women in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, Sudan, Senegal and Yemen. Report prepared for Special Program, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS)

Mccauley, J., Yurk, R.A., Jenckes, M.W., & Ford, D.E. (1998). Inside pandora's box: Abused women's experiences with clinicians and health services. *Journal of General Internal Medicine 13*(8), 549-555.

McDonald, R., Jouriles, E. N., & Skopp, N. A. (2006). Reducing conduct problems among children brought to women's shelters: Intervention effects 24 months following termination of services. *Journal of Family Psychology, 20,* 127-136

Meriwether, N.K. (2003). Can self-esteem sanction morality? *Journal of Moral Education 32*(2), 167-181.

Midlarsky, E., Venkataramani-Kothari, A., & Plante, M. (2006). Domestic violence in the Chinese and South Asian communities. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, *1087*, 279–300.

Morash, H.Y., & Holtfreter, K. (2007). Risk factors for abusive relationships. *Violence Against Women, 59*, 29-43.

Moss, V. A., Pitula, C. R., Campbell, J. C., & Halstead, L. (1997). The experience of terminating an abusive relationship from an Anglo and African American perspective: A qualitative descriptive study. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, *18*, 433–454.

National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence. *Wheels: Adapted from the power and control wheel model.* Retrieved from www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html

National Institute of Justice. (2005). *Report on victims of domestic violence.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Okour, A.M., & Hijazi, H.H. (2009). Domestic violence and family dysfunction as risk factor for violent behavior among university students in North Jordan. *Journal of Family Violence 24* (6), 361-336.

Okun, L.E. (2001). Women abuse: Facts replacing myths. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

O'Leary, D. K., & Maiuro, R. D. (2001). *Psychological abuse in violent domestic relations.* NewYork: Springer.

O'Neill, D. (1998). A Post-structuralist review of the theoretical literature surrounding wife abuse. *Violence against women, 4*, 457-490.

Orpinas, P. (1999). Who is violent? Factors associated with aggressive behaviors in Latin America and Spain. *Pan American Journal of Public Health 5*(4), 232-243.

Oropesa, R.S. (1997). Development and marital power in Mexico. *Social Forces 75*(4), 1291-1317.

Parry, C., Tibbs, J., Van Der Spuy, J., & Cummins, G. (1996). Alcohol attributable fractions for trauma in South Africa. *Curationis 19*(1), 2-5.

Patton M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage

Prochaska, J. O., & DiClemente, C. C. (1983). Stages and processes of self-change of smoking: Toward an integrative model of change. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *51*, 390–395.

Prochaska, J. O., DiClemente, C. C., & Norcross, J. C. (1992). In search of how people change: Applications to addictive behaviors. *American Psychologist*, *47*, 1102–1114.

Raj, A., & Silverman, J. (2002). Violence against immigrant women: The roles of culture, context and legal immigrant status on intimate partner abuse. *Violence Against Women, 8*, 367–398.

Raj, A., & Silverman, J. (2003). Immigrant South Asian woman at greater risk of injury from intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*, 435–439.

Rehman, T., & Dziegielewski, S. (2003). Women who choose Islam. *International Journal of Mental Health, 32*(3), 31–49.

Rennison, M., & Welchans, W. (2000). *Intimate Partner Violence*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Rosenbaum, A., & O'Leary, D. (2001). Martial violence: Characteristics of abusive couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 49,* 63-71

Saleebey, D. (1994). Culture, theory, and narrative: The intersection of meanings in practice. *Social Work, 39,* 351-359.

Segal, M.H., Lonner, W.J. & Berry, J.W. (1998). Cross cultural psychology as a scholarly discipline: On the flowering of culture in behavioral research. *American Psychologist, 53,* 1101-1110.

Schafer, J., Caetano, R., & Clark, C. L. (1998). Rates of intimate partner violence in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 88,* 1702–1704.

Sharma, S. (1997). Domestic violence against minority women: Interventions prevention and health implications. *Equal Opportunity International 16*(2), 1-14.

Singer, M.S. (1999). The role of concern for others and moral intensity in adolescents' ethicality judgments. *Journal of Genetic Psychology, 160*(2), 155-166.

Sleutel, M. (1998). Women's experiences of abuse: A review of qualitative research. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 19*(6), 525-539.

Smith, T. W. (2002). The polls-review: The Muslim population of the United States: The methodology of estimates. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 66,* 404-417.

Sue, D. W. (2006). *Multicultural social work practice.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (1999). *Counseling the culturally different* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Thompson, T. S. (2006). Couple conflict leading to marital instability: A content analysis of marital preparation programs. The University of Texas at Arlington. *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.*

Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (2000). *Extent, nature and consequences of intimate partner violence*: Findings from the National violence against women survey. Washington DC: National Institute of Justice.

U.S. Census (2008). *African American and Muslim families*. Retrieved from www.todaysdrum.com/880/us-census-African American

Valois, R.R. (2002). Risk factors and behaviors associated with adolescent violence an aggression. *American Journal of Health Behavior, 26*(6), 454-464.

Walker, L.E., (1999). Psychology and domestic violence around the world. *American Psychologist 54*(1), 21-29.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yllo, K. (1993). Through a feminist lens: Gender, power, and violence. In R. J. Gelles &D. R. Loseke (Eds.), *Current controversies on domestic violence* (pp. 47-62). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Yllo, K., & Bograd, M. (1988). *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse*. New York: Sage.

Yoshioka, M. R., & Dang, Q. (2000). *Asian domestic violence report: A study of Chinese, Cambodian, Korean, South Asian and Vietnamese communities in Massachusetts*. Boston: Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence.

Yoshioka, M., DiNoia, M. R., & Ullah, K. (2001). Attitudes towards marital violence: An examination of four Asian communities. *Violence Against Women, 7*, 900–926.

Yoshioka, M., Gilbert, L., El-Bassel, N., & Baig-Amin, N. (2003). Social support and disclosure of abuse: Comparing South Asian, African American and Hispanic battered women. *Journal of Domestic violence, 18*, 171–180.

APPENDIX A. STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL WORK

Academic Honesty Policy

Capella University's Academic Honesty Policy (3.01.01) holds learners accountable for the integrity of work they submit, which includes but is not limited to discussion postings, assignments, comprehensive exams, and the dissertation or capstone project.

Established in the Policy are the expectations for original work, rationale for the policy, definition of terms that pertain to academic honesty and original work, and disciplinary consequences of academic dishonesty. Also stated in the Policy is the expectation that learners will follow APA rules for citing another person's ideas or works.

The following standards for original work and definition of *plagiarism* are discussed in the Policy:

> Learners are expected to be the sole authors of their work and to acknowledge the authorship of others' work through proper citation and reference. Use of another person's ideas, including another learner's, without proper reference or citation constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty and is prohibited conduct. (p. 1)
>
> Plagiarism is one example of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own. Plagiarism also includes copying verbatim or rephrasing ideas without properly acknowledging the source by author, date, and publication medium. (p. 2)

Capella University's Research Misconduct Policy (3.03.06) holds learners accountable for research integrity. What constitutes research misconduct is discussed in the Policy:

> Research misconduct includes but is not limited to falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, misappropriation, or other practices that seriously deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the academic community for proposing, conducting, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. (p. 1)

Learners failing to abide by these policies are subject to consequences, including but not limited to dismissal or revocation of the degree.

Statement of Original Work and Signature

I have read, understood, and abided by Capella University's Academic Honesty Policy (3.01.01) and Research Misconduct Policy (3.03.06), including Policy Statements, Rationale, and Definitions.

I attest that this dissertation or capstone project is my own work. Where I have used the ideas or words of others, I have paraphrased, summarized, or used direct quotes following the guidelines set forth in the APA *Publication Manual*.

Mentor name and school	Dr. Bard Schatzman; Harold Abel School of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Learner signature and date	4/30/2014

APPENDIX B. DATA CODING SHEET

Data Coding Sheet

Dimensions of domestic violence of Muslim women from South Asia, Middle East, Africa and the United States

Country of origin					
Questions	**Interview Answers (grouped by themes)**	**South Asia**	**Middle East**	**Africa**	**United States**
What does the Qur'an say about domestic violence?					
	Domestic violence is wrong	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**
	Domestic violence is "haram" (Arabic word for "forbidden by Islamic law")	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**
What do your religious leaders/Imams say about it?					
	Religious leaders don't talk about domestic violence	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
What is your understanding of Muslim beliefs about domestic violence?					
	Domestic violence is not Islamic	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	People interpret the Qur'an to believe that domestic violence is okay in marriage	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**

How often or what percentage of families experience domestic violence in your community?					
	Not many women are being abused	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Domestic violence is not in Muslim families	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	1-5%	**1**	**2**	**0**	**1**
	Probably more than we know because we don't report it	**0**	**1**	**1**	**2**
What do you think contributes to domestic violence in your community?					
	Sometimes women are not heard or respected at important decision makers in the home	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**
	I am his second wife so he treated me badly	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**
	Doesn't happen if you marry young	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	My husband was not a good Muslim	**2**	**1**	**1**	**2**
	He was drinking too much	**1**	**1**	**1**	**0**
	My husband has a mental illness	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**

	I do not work because I stay home with the children so I had no money	**1**	**2**	**0**	**0**
	Women are weaker	**0**	**2**	**1**	**0**
	Women are not as smart because we aren't taught about the different things we need to know	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**
Aside from your religion, what do you see as your cultures attitude about domestic violence? How do you think that those who share your culture feel about domestic violence?					
	Women have set duties that are expected like cleaning, cooking, care of children	**2**	**1**	**0**	**1**
	You are a difficult wife if you are being abused	**1**	**1**	**2**	**0**
	You are not a good wife, you must be having a bad attitude of a women if your husband hits you	**2**	**2**	**0**	**1**
	They know domestic violence is wrong but they still expect you to stay married	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**
How are friends and family					

influential in the prevention of domestic violence?					
	If you tell of Domestic violence your daughters will have a hard time finding a husband	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
	Our family is embarrassed to have a divorced sister or daughter. Women look bad when they are alone	**2**	**2**	**2**	**2**
How much do family members and friends influence a victim's decision about reporting domestic violence to law enforcement?					
	Domestic violence is a private family matter so I did not want to tell anyone or ask for help	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	It is shameful to leave or report your husband	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	Your friends and family tell you not to tell anyone. It is something that makes you, the victim look bad	**1**	**2**	**1**	**2**
	If you tell the police they will arrest your husband and then you cannot afford to eat	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**

	If you tell the police they will take your children away from you	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**
	The police will not help you and you will get beat more for telling	**2**	**1**	**2**	**1**
What domestic violence programs are you aware of that are available in your community? How are these programs effective? If they are not effective, what might make them effective?					
	Domestic violence programs are not here until you need job training when you are divorced	**0**	**1**	**0**	**3**
	There is no program to help, you have to get money and support from your friends and family	**2**	**1**	**1**	**0**
	Programs give housing for a short time. They cannot help us	**3**	**3**	**2**	**1**
	Programs do not help with childcare or giving enough money to be without your	**2**	**3**	**2**	**2**

	husband				
What is your view of the different forms of domestic violence?					
	Hitting	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	Pushing	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**
	Kicking	**2**	**3**	**3**	**0**
	Breaking bones	**1**	**1**	**0**	**0**
	Slapping	**3**	**3**	**3**	**3**
	Choking	**1**	**0**	**1**	**3**
	Grabbing/twisting arms	**2**	**2**	**3**	**3**
	Throwing things that hit me	**1**	**3**	**2**	**3**
	Calling names	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**
	Unwanted Sex	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**